M: Fitzgerald 1488 h.21(1)

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

TRIAL

OF

EDWARD SMYTH,

Late CURATE of BALLYCULTER, in the Dioceſe of DOWN.

The JEWS *made inſurrection, with one accord, againſt* PAUL, *and brought him to the judgment-ſeat, ſaying, This fellow perſuadeth men to worſhip God, contrary to the law.* Acts. 18. 12, 13.

They ſtirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Iſrael, help ——this is the man that teacheth all men every where againſt the people, and the law, and this place. Acts. 21. 27, 28.

We have found this man a peſtilent fellow, and a mover of ſedition, among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ring-leader of the SECT *of the* NAZARENES, *who, alſo, hath gone about to profane the temple.* Acts. 24. 5. 6.

They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues. John. 16. 2.

God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited wall; for, ſitteſt thou to judge me after the law, and commandeſt me to be ſmitten contrary to the law. Acts. 23. 3.

DUBLIN.

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PREFACE.

AS the Heathen Philoſophers had no certain guide to lead them to the acquiſition of happineſs, it is not to be wondered at, that they entertained ſo many different opinions concerning the *Summum bonum*, or chief good. Having nothing to direct them but their own corrupted reaſon, and having very imperfect (if any) notions of an everlaſting ſtate, after the diſſolution of this World, they all miſſed the mark they aimed at. But, it is truly ſurpriſing, that we, who live under the Chriſtian diſpenſation, and profeſs our belief of future rewards and puniſhments, ſhould diſſent from each other ſo widely, with reſpect to the *things which belong unto our peace.* Though we have the word of God as *a light to our feet, and a lantern to our paths*, yet the moſt of us walk in darkneſs, and *grope for the wall, like the blind, ſtumbling at noon-day as in the night.* But, whence ariſes this diverſity of ſentiment amongſt us, in matters relating to *the common ſalvation?* Chriſt himſelf informs us, we do *err, becauſe we know not the ſcriptures, neither the power of God.* The generality of the world, becauſe they have

been baptized with water in their infancy — have followed the mode of worſhip delivered down by tradition from their fathers—and are called Chriſtians—reſt ſatisfied with that name, and with the *form of godlineſs*. Though the Apoſtle has ſaid, *They that are Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh with its affections and luſts*, yet they madly imagine that they may enjoy *the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, and, at laſt, *enter into the kingdom of God*. Though they muſt acknowledge, in their ſerious moments (if ever they have any) that they are placed on Earth as Probationers for Heaven, yet they declare, by their practice, that they are ſent into the world, like *the Leviathan* into the deep, to *take their paſtime therein*. Well, therefore, may the *little flock* of Chriſt ſay, *We know that we are of God, but the* WHOLE WORLD *lieth in wickedneſs*. The Devil who is the *God of this world, has blinded the minds of them who believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt ſhould ſhine unto them. Loving darkneſs rather than light, the hearts of the people are waxed groſs—their ears are dull of hearing—and their eyes they have cloſed; leſt, at any time they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and ſhould be converted, and Chriſt ſhould heal them.* Nay, there are many who have been deeply convinced of *the truth as it is in Jeſus*, and yet will not ſeparate themſelves from the ungodly world, nor *caſt in their lot* among the deſpiſed people of God. *Seeking the honour which cometh from Man rather than the honour which cometh from God only*, they cannot bear to be pointed at as ſingular. Fearing *the reproaches and revilings of men*, they *quench and reſiſt the Holy Spirit* which is ſtriving with them; and, to ſtifle their convictions, plunge into all *the exceſs of riot*, 'till, at laſt, their *conſciences*, become

become *ſeared, as with a hot iron, through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.* The ſubtile ſerpent brings them to believe that they may eat of the fruit of the tree of pleaſure, and not die—that God is ſo very pitiful, and of ſuch tender mercy, that he will never damn them, for living like the reſt of their neighbours. They ſwallow the deadly poiſon, and liſten to *the father of lies*, rather than to *the God of truth*, who has expreſsly told them, that BROAD *is the way, and* WIDE *is the gate, that leadeth to* DESTRUCTION, *and* MANY *there be which go in thereat*; and that STAIT *is the gate, and* NARROW *is the way which leadeth unto life, and* FEW *there be that find it.* Whatever *fear of God* they have, it *is taught them by the precepts of men*; and their embracing ſuch or ſuch a profeſſion, is owing to the education they have received from their parents, not to their own deliberate choice. Certain it is, there is but *one faith, one baptiſm, one hope of our calling*, as there is but *one* common Lord and Saviour. But *one* way there is to Heaven, and Jeſus ſays, *I am that way.* But let not the world imagine, that, becauſe they depend upon him for final ſalvation,—they ſhall attain unto it. No—if *in works they deny him*, if they do not *follow his ſteps*, their *hope ſhall conſume, as a ſnail that paſſeth away.* Neither let the *immoral* moraliſts, who ſay, "we do all the good we can," believe that their hope is better grounded. *They are hatching cockatrice eggs*, which will *break out into vipers, and weaving the ſpiders web: But their webs ſhall not become garments* (ſaith the Lord God) *neither ſhall they cover themſelves with their works.* However ſplendid, however pompous, they may appear in their own eyes, or the eyes of others, they are *works of iniquity. All* their *very righteouſ-*

neſſes are as filthy rags, which ſhall be blown away with the breath of God's noſtrils, *as chaff before the wind*; for, no work, (however good in itſelf) can be acceptable to God, 'till it proceeds from that faith which *juſtifieth the ungodly*—that *faith which purifieth the heart*—that *faith which is unfeigned, and worketh by love* — that *faith which overcometh the world. Who ſhall aſcend* (ſays David) *into the hill of the Lord? He* only *that hath clean hands, and a pure heart*——a heart *baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire*, which has *purged away all the droſs* of ſin. Who are the true Chriſtians? They who have received that ſpirit, whereby they can cry *Abba, Father*, MY *Lord, and* MY *God*—who are *going on unto perfection*——labouring after *that mind which was in Chriſt—purifying themſelves even as the angels are pure*——being of *one ſpirit with the Lord*, and never defiling their bodies by ſin, becauſe they are the conſecrated *temples of the Holy Ghoſt*. And now,

" Ye diff'rent ſects, who all declare
" Lo! Chriſt is here—lo! Chriſt is there—
" Your ſtronger proof divinely give,
" And ſhew me where the Chriſtians live."

If you can find a man who daily *glorifies God in his body, and in his ſpirit*, and, *whatſoever he does in word or deed, does all in the name of the Lord Jeſus, hating even the garments ſpotted by the fleſh*, he (and he alone) is a member of Chriſt, his living Head, whether he belongs to Church, Maſs, or Meeting. For, as Mr. Law well obſerves, " devotion conſiſts not either in private, or public duties, but in a life devoted to God." It is alſo, as certain, that whoever thus *poſſeſſes* his *veſſel in ſanctification and honour*, will

will be made *a gazing-ſtock by reproaches, and a by-word among the Heathen.* The very *Drunkards* will *make ſongs* upon him (as they did on David,) and *ſhooting out the lip*, will cry, *fie upon thee, fie upon thee——we ſaw it with our eyes.* When we conſider that *the Prince of Peace* himſelf, who continually *went about doing good*, not only to the ſouls, but, alſo, to the bodies of his creatures, was *deſpiſed, rejected, and crucified of men*, it is not to be wondered at, that any who endeavour to tread in his bleſſed ſteps, ſhould meet with the ſame inhuman treatment from the world. If he, who was the Holy one, and the Juſt, was accounted *a blaſphemer, a ſorcerer, and a perverter of the nations*, whoever ſpends his time, and talents, like him, in bringing *life and immortality to light, thro' the* preaching of his *goſpel*, will, aſſuredly, be branded with the ſame opprobrious names, as *the ſervant is not above his Lord. If they have perſecuted me* (ſays Chriſt) *they will, alſo, perſecute you*, you that *follow me in the regeneration*: And, *if they have called the Maſter of the houſe, Beelzebub, how much more will they call them of his houſhold?* Tho' *He ſpoke as never man ſpoke*, yet they ſaid of him, *He hath a Devil, and is mad, why hear ye him?* Nay, *his* own *friends* wanted to *lay hold on him, for they ſaid, he is beſide himſelf.* In like manner, if one of his appointed Stewards, thro' the miniſtry of his word, ſhakes the ſtrong holds of Satan, the ungodly world who are lying in the arms of that wicked one, immediately take the alarm, and cry out, as if he was a mad bull, *Fœnum habet in cornu—longe fuge—Away with ſuch a fellow from the earth, it is not fit that he ſhould live.* Though he forfeits his health, his

relations, his temporal concerns, and (what is dearer to moſt people) his reputation, in order to bring ſouls unto God, yet the requital he meets with is contempt, hatred, and perſecution. When *a lying ſpirit, in the mouths of four hundred Prophets*, tells the world they *ſhall have peace, tho' they walk in the imaginations of their own hearts*, a faithful Micaiah, who, undauntedly, ſpeaks the word of the Lord, ſaying, *except ye repent, ye ſhall all periſh*, muſt needs be a moſt unwelcome meſſenger. The wicked will, infallibly, *hate him; for, he never propheſieth good* unto them; *but always evil.* If, like honeſt Nathan, he tells an adulterous David, *Thou art the man*, ſuch plain-dealing, tho' abſolutely neceſſary, will be looked upon as officious impertinence; and *a Barabbas—a Judas*—a drunken, ſwearing, hunting, card-playing Clergyman will be preferred before him.

On theſe principles, the *fiery trial* I have lately paſſed through may be eaſily accounted for. Our deſpiſed Fore-runner, well knowing the enmity which *the carnal mind* has to God, and his holy ways, warned all his true followers that they ſhould *be brought before Governors and Kings for his name-ſake.* The world is juſt the ſame that it was 1700 years ago; nay, *as it was in the days of Cain*, who murdered his righteous brother, *even ſo it is now: They that are born after the fleſh will perſecute them that are born after the Spirit. Principalities, and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places*, will be exerciſed againſt every child of God; and for no other reaſon, but becauſe, *knowing the terrors of the Lord*, he would gladly *perſuade men to flee from the wrath to come*, and be ſaved.

It

It was to ſave ſouls that I have been appointed a Miniſter; and, therefore, from love to my periſhing fellow-creatures, I have been induced to make myſelf *a ſpectacle unto the world*, and am content to be counted as *the filth and off-ſcouring of all things*, if I can but do good in my generation, by *bringing* many *ſons and* daughters *unto glory*, But, becauſe I have *teſtified of the world that it's deeds are evil, the Princes of the Earth have ſet themſelves, and the rulers have taken counſel againſt me.* But, bleſſed be the Lord, *my tower, my rock, and my fortreſs, who delivered me from my ſtrong enemy, and from them which hated me. They are confounded, they are brought to ſhame, that ſought my hurt.*

It muſt be evident to the world that I do not publiſh this account to gratify any unbecoming paſſions. Was I deſirous of revenge, I might ſue any of the Petitioners for damages, at common law——might indict ſome of them for perjury and forgery, and introduce incidental anecdotes which would make their characters appear in no pleaſing light. But how, then, ſhould I fulfil the royal law of love, which ſaith, *bleſs them who curſe you—do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you. The weapons of* MY *warfare are not carnal.* I ſhall not, therefore, *render* unto them *evil for evil, or railing for railing.* It is neceſſary, indeed, that I ſhould endeavour to remove the aſperſions thrown out againſt me; and this cannot be done, without expoſing in ſome meaſure, *theſe forgers of lies.* Sorry I am that they have obliged me thus to *proclaim upon the houſe-tops*, what they have done and ſpoken in *darkneſs*; but the advertiſements of Meſſrs. Bernard

x "Bishop of Down" — not "Brood of the Devil"

and Ralph Ward, and the unaccountable conduct of the B— of D— render it doubly incumbent upon me. The prosperity of Zion, and the salvation of souls, as well as my own character, require this public defence of my conduct, and doctrines. An Apostle has said, *let not your good be evil spoken of*: If, therefore, I took no notice of the calumnies which have been so industriously propagated by the Devil, and his legions, my silence might be considered as a tacit confession of my guilt. And as I am determined, by the grace of God, to *teach, and preach, in the cities*, the good effects of my ministry might be prevented by prejudice, which noxious weed the enemy of souls is ready enough to plant in the minds of the people.

I now submit my cause to the inspection of the public, that they may judge for themselves. But I beseech the reader to proceed no further, 'till he prays to *the Sun of righteousness* to enlighten his understanding, so will he be enabled to determine with candor and impartiality. With the *noble Bereans*, let him *search the scriptures*, and see *whether these things be so*: And if my doctrines be founded upon Holy Writ, I hope he will cordially embrace them—— if not, *let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head.*

AN

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

TRIAL

OF

EDWARD SMYTH.

TO ſhew more fully the ill-uſage I have met with from Lord ——, it may not be amiſs to inform the inquiſitive reader of the motives which firſt induced me to remove from Dublin. Meeting, once, with Mr. Meade Ogle, he aſked me if I would accept a Cure under the patronage of a nobleman. I immediately declined his offer with thanks, acquainting him that I was ſo advantageouſly and agreeably ſituated, that I could not think of ſettling in any country-cure, however well circumſtanced. As he ſtill preſſed me (that I might not appear poſitive) I told him I would conſult with my brother, and ſend him a written anſwer in the evening,

evening, which I did accordingly, confirming my former denial. Shortly after, Sir John Par—ll (brother-in-law to Lord ———, and to whom I was an entire ſtranger) invited me, three ſundry times, to his table, when he renewed the propoſal made by Mr. Ogle, but to as little purpoſe. Though he painted out the beauties of C—le—d in the moſt lively colours—told me I would have a hunter always at my command, and a key to a large library, from whence I might ſelect any book I pleaſed, and retire to the temple, which was ſweetly calculated for reading and meditation—yet I could not be prevailed on by his florid deſcription, nor even by his information that Lord —— had ſome livings in his gift, to one of which, I would, probably, ſucceed.

He, then, ſtrongly entreated me to "take a trip to C—le—d," adding that "the very beauty of the place would be ſufficient to make me change my reſolution." As I continued inflexible, he ſpoke to my uncle (Charles Smyth) and repreſented the matter in ſuch a favourable light to him, that he ſent for me, and adviſed me to embrace his offer. Sir John Par—ll having wrote to Lord —— to ſend a carriage for me to Newry, I conſented to pay him a viſit, and ſee what accommodations could be given me. A houſe and garden being promiſed, and being encouraged by the Biſhop of the dioceſe, I returned for my family to Dublin, and brought them down to C—le—d, where I was at great expence and trouble in repairing a ruinous houſe.———As I was at that time, beginning to think ſeriouſly, I did not reliſh, or partake of, the amuſements I met with there; which, no doubt, contributed to render me diſagreeable to his Lordſhip.

Lordſhip. But, conſidering the words of the Apoſtle, *if I yet pleaſed men, I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt*, I followed the dictates of my conſcience, ſaying with Joſhua, *chuſe ye whom ye will ſerve, but as for me, and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* However, I lived, for more than a year, on a friendly footing with him, when I was conſtrained to write the following letter, from regard to him, as well as a thorough perſuaſion that it was my bounden duty.

'My Lord,

'TO one of your Lordſhips underſtanding no apology need be made for the freedom I take in thus addreſſing 'you, as you muſt know it to be the indiſpenſable duty 'of every true Miniſter, to reprove, and to exhort, without reſpect of perſons, as occaſion requires. My own 'everlaſting welfare depends on the faithful diſcharge of 'my miniſtry; and I am, alſo, too ſollicitous for your 'happineſs, both temporal, and eternal, to paſs by in 'ſilence a crime with which your Lordſhip is univer'ſally charged. Detraction, indeed, is a foul-mouthed 'Monſter, and has, perhaps, made more free with your 'Lordſhip's conduct, than it deſerves: At leaſt, that '*charity*, which *hopeth all things*, muſt incline the benevolent and humane to think ſo. Therefore, my Lord, 'I look on it as the higheſt act of friendſhip (and hope 'you will eſteem it ſuch) to give you an opportunity of 'convincing a cenſorious world of the falſity of its aſſer'tions, by removing from your houſe an object, with 'whom (it is ſaid) your Lordſhip holds a criminal con'nexion. But, as you may be innocent of the accu'ſation, it is neceſſary I ſhould ſpeak in plain terms, to 'render myſelf intelligible; aſſuring you moſt ſolemnly,

'that

'that, far from meaning to give you the leaſt offence, 'the motives which induce me to write, proceed from 'a heart, grateful for many favours, and warmly inter- 'eſted in your Lordſhip's honour and character. Pre- 'ſuming, then, on the privilege of my ſacred office, '(but with all humility at ſame time) I beg leave to ac- 'quaint you, that 'tis reported by all ranks, that one of 'your ſervant-maids (called Honour) is partaker of 'your Lordſhip's bed. How true it is, you yourſelf 'beſt know. For my part, the very thought of ſuch 'guilt makes me ſhudder. 'Tis ſcarcely to be credited, 'that you would live in avowed defiance of that law, 'which forbids us to commit adultery; and to the 'breach of which ſuch ſevere denunciations of God's 'wrath are annexed. Surely, it cannot be. Your 'Lordſhip, I ſhould ſuppoſe, has too much ſenſe, to 'purchaſe the diſſembled ſmiles of an infamous, wicked 'harlot, even at the hazard of your immortal ſoul: 'Nor can it be imagined, that one of ſuch high deſ- 'cent, and refined education, would ſtoop ſo low; 'forgetting both the duty you owe your wife, your 'children, yourſelf, and your God.

'But, my Lord, as common fame has trumpeted this 'report abroad, conſider your character as a gentle- 'man, your dignity as a peer, your example as a father, 'and above all, your ſalvation as a Chriſtian: And 'be perſuaded to turn off the deſpicable wretch, 'who has brought the tongue of Obloquy upon you. 'Beſides, the rich and the great are the patterns, 'from whence the lower claſs of men copy their man- 'ners; therefore, it is peculiarly incumbent on them, 'to ſet a good precedent: And, as the ſcriptures have, 'ſaid, 'abſtain from all appearance of evil,' if the

'woman

woman be not attached to you in any other manner, 'than as one of your hired ſervants, you cannot, I am 'ſure you will not, heſitate about diſcharging her 'immediately. Deſpiſe not the ſalutary advice, tho' 'coming from ſo obſcure a pen; but, regard it as 'dictated by the friendly wiſhes of one, who is,

'My Lord,

'your Lordſhip's moſt ſincere,

'and truly reſpectful humble ſervant,

'EDWARD SMYTH.'

Finding, after a conſiderable time, that the above letter produced no other effect, than a great ſhyneſs and reſerve in his Lordſhip towards me, I then preached on this text, "*Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*," without making any perſonal application. That ſermon (as I have been informed) gave great offence; ſo that in ſome time after, he wrote me a note informing me he had occaſion for the houſe I lived in, and that I muſt provide another. This, he imagined, was the moſt effectual means to baniſh me from my Cure, as none of his tenants were allowed to ſet me a houſe in the pariſh. Herein, however, he was diſappointed; for God opened the heart of one man (who happened to have a leaſe under another landlord) to furniſh me with a ſmall cabbin: But neither he nor I could get grazing either for horſe or cow, though many were inclined to ſerve us.

When I conſider that the King of Kings, who created all things, *had not on earth where to lay his head*, I have reaſon to adore and praiſe him, for giving

giving me even a *hole*, or *neſt*, with *the foxes and birds of the air*. And though I have ſuffered many inconveniences and hardſhips from my preſent ſituation, yet, *(through Chriſt ſtrengthning me)* I could patiently endure greater, for the opportunity of doing good among a people, who (as far as they durſt) have always ſhewn great love and reſpect for me; and to whom I am moſt cloſely attached. But, as I have been ſo frequently, and ſo warmly, ſollicited by numbers, *from the eaſt, and from the weſt, from the north and from the ſouth*, to *preach the word* among them, I dare not reſiſt theſe calls, or *fly*, like Jonah, *from the preſence of the Lord*; eſpecially, as God has often ſent my public preaching with *power, and demonſtration of his ſpirit*, to the hearts of many. It has been, therefore, for a long time paſt, my intention to abdicate my preſent Cure, that I might be at liberty to go whereever I imagined I could be of moſt uſe: And therefore, though lucrative offers have been lately made me, I rejected them all, reſolving to keep myſelf diſengaged. But it occurred to me, that as Lord — was very ſollicitous to get me out of the pariſh, God might incline his heart to give me 50 guineas for building a preaching-houſe in Dunsford, on condition of my reſignation, which I was reſolved on, whether he complyed with my propoſal, or not. When made to him, he ſaid he would take time to conſider of it, as he meant to conſult the Biſhop and Dean. What advice they gave him, I know not; but, in a few weeks, I went for his final anſwer, which was, that he would give nothing for *ſuch* a purpoſe. But, I ſuppoſe (as he encouraged the building of a Popiſh chapel) that he thought to get me out of the Cure, without parting with his golden images; for, on that very day, he ſent for the Church-

Church-wardens, and ordered them to carry about a petition againſt me. Knowing that the affections of the pariſhioners were ſtrongly ſet upon me, they plainly told him, that if he did not ſign it himſelf, very few in the pariſh would; therefore, with much reluctance, he ſubſcribed it. Having taken a copy of it, I then clearly perceived it was the will of God I ſhould wait the event, being perſuaded that he wou'd *bring forth my innocence as noon day, or as a lamp that burneth.*

THE PETITION.

To the Right Rev. the Lord Biſhop of Down and Connor, the humble Petition of the Church Wardens, and other Inhabitants of the Pariſh of Ballyculter, in the Diocese of Down,

'SHEWETH,

'THAT your Lordſhip's Petitioners have received 'great and juſt ſcandal and offence by the conduct and 'behaviour of the Rev. Edward Smyth, curate of the 'ſaid pariſh—that the ſaid Edward Smyth holds new 'and ſtrange opinions contrary to the Catholic faith, 'and derogatory from the goodneſs of a merciful God, 'and openly and publicly declares and preaches the 'ſame in the ſaid pariſh of Ballyculter.——That he 'publicly aſſociates with people called Swadlers—that 'he preaches and prays with them in the fields, and in 'private houſes, as well within the precincts of the 'ſaid pariſh of Ballyculter, as in the neighbouring pa-'riſhes—that many of his attendants on theſe field-'preaching occaſions, pretend to fall into fits, when 'ſaid Smyth takes upon him to exorciſe, and to caſt

'out

'out the Devils with which, he ſays, they are poſſeſſed. 'That he lately took a journey to the city of Derry, 'where he met a weak young Clergyman, of the 'name of Abraham, whom he perſuaded to attend 'him, by telling him that he had a viſion by which he 'was commanded to go and convert the world, and 'that he (Abraham) was to be his fellow Apoſtle—— 'That he is at this time ſolliciting a ſubſcription for 'building a conventicle in the pariſh of Dunsford, 'where many of his moſt enthuſiaſtic followers reſide— 'That, at one time, a number of theſe perſons came 'after him to the pariſh church of Ballyculter, where 'many of them, in the midſt of ſermon, were ſeized 'with pretended convulſions, to the great diſturbance 'and ſcandal of the pariſhioners.—That your Petitioners are really afraid to permit their children to attend 'divine worſhip in their pariſh church, leſt they ſhould 'either be infected with enthuſiaſm, or driven to deſpair 'of the mercy of God. That your Petitioners are 'really perſuaded that the ſaid Mr. Smyth is either a 'real enthuſiaſt, or ſomething worſe, in either, a very 'improper perſon to have the care and direction of a 'pariſh.

'Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray, as well 'in their own names, as in the names of many other of 'the Pariſhioners, that your Lordſhip will be pleaſed to 'revoke and vacate the licence of the ſaid Mr. 'Smyth.' —— And your Petitioners will pray.

Shortly after, the B——p came to ſee me, and adviſed me, as a friend, to give up my Cure. I replied, "your Lordſhip may wiſh me well; but, in the preſent inſtance,

inſtance, I cannot take your advice: Becauſe, if I reſigned at ſuch a time, the world might juſtly condemn me, imagining that I was conſcious of the truth of all the charges laid againſt me, conſequently, there would be little probability of my doing any good, as a Miniſter. ——That the world would, alſo, reckon it imprudent in me to throw away that proviſion which was, partly, the ſupport of my family; eſpecially, as I could not reaſonably expect an appointment to any other Cure." His Lordſhip then ſaid, "It was I, indeed, that adviſed Lord —— to draw up a petition, as it was the only legal meaſure he could adopt, if he had any complaints to prefer againſt you: And I hope you will not be offended, if I ſhould take public notice of it." I aſſured him that ſo far from being offended at it, I would not think his Lordſhip acted conſiſtent with his office, if he did not bring the matter to a trial, which I requeſted he might, ſpeedily.

Let the world now judge whether his Lordſhip has behaved either with the courteſy of a gentleman, the humanity of a Chriſtian, or the duty of a B——p. His Lord and Maſter had given him ſufficient directions for his conduct, which it became him to follow. *If thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother: But, if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and a Publican.* Now, I can truly ſay, that he never ſpoke to me either in private,

or

of publick, with regard to my manner of acting, though he heard many reports about me, and knew that I preached in the open ſtreets of the very town where he reſided. Should he not, firſt, have endeavoured to convince me of the impropriety of my behaviour, before he brought me into a publick court, like a common malefactor? Have the reſt of his brethren acted more ingenuouſly toward me? No—— many of them have railed at, and calumniated me in the pulpit, and in private companies; but, knowing their inſufficiency to maintain their fallacious reaſoning (copied out of the writings of ſome *Orthodox Divine*), like cowardly cur-dogs, they have only barked at a diſtance. Tho' they juſtly deſerve the laſh of my whip, yet, like the harmleſs traveller, I ſhall paſs them by unheeded; only obſerving, that the B——p himſelf (at the laſt ordination he held in Liſburn) with ſmiles of applauſe, heard one of theſe raw, unfledged Deacons, venting his nonſenſical clamour againſt me, tho' it is expreſly contrary to the 10th canon. Had they any regard for me, or the ſouls of their fellow-creatures, whom (they ſuppoſe) I am deluding, would they not ſtrive, by perſonal advice, or, at leaſt by letter, to convince me of my erroneous doctrines: But, not one of them has had good-nature enough to take this friendly ſtep. I now aſſure them I am open to conviction, and will take it as a particular kindneſs, if they will point out any of my errors. But *if they ſpeak, let them ſpeak as the oracles of GOD*; otherwiſe I ſhall not believe their *traditions, which make the word of GOD of none effect*. Oh that I could call them all my *fellow-labourers*, my *fellow-helpers to the truth!* But, alas! as faſt as I ſtrive to *build up* the Saints *in their moſt holy faith*, they are, with all

all their ſtrength (which, indeed, is perfect weakneſs) labouring to pull them down again. Did they fight as manfully for the eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's kingdom, as they do for Satan's, *the earth* might ſoon *be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea.* But to return.

On the 16th of October, 1776, I was ſerved with a citation from the Biſhop's court, and the copy of a petition along with it, which, upon examination, I found to be different from the one here publiſhed, which I declared in court. I have great reaſon to complain that I got ſuch ſhort notice of the trial, five days being the only ſpace allowed me to procure and ſerve citations, and otherways prepare myſelf: So that during that time, I rode about 100 miles, and was forced to travel on the Sabbath-day, that I might attend the court, which was very improperly held on a Monday.

Finding alſo, that a ſmall country village was fixed upon for the place of *execution*, inſtead of Liſburn (the reſidence of the Biſhop) or ſome other capital town; to prevent *this thing* from being *done in a corner*, and to give the multitude an opportunity of hearing a matter, which was really of general concernment, I ordered the following advertiſement to be inſerted in the Belfaſt News Letter.

To the PUBLICK.

"Being cited to appear before the Lord Biſhop of "Down and Connor, or his Vicar-General, at a con- "ſiſtorial court to be held at Knockbreda, on Mon- "day the 21ſt inſt. about 11 o'clock, to anſwer the "contents

" contents of a petition, ſigned by Lord ——, and " other pariſhioners of Ballyculter; I, therefore, (be- " ing conſcious of my own innocence) give this no- " tice, that the trial may be as public as poſſible.

" Oct. 18, 1776. EDWARD SMYTH."

Accordingly, great numbers aſſembled, and after the petition was publickly read by the Regiſter, I made a ſhort verbal defence, in which I was greatly interrupted, both by the Regiſter and Proctor employed againſt me. I had none to ſpeak or act for me, but that GOD *who ſticketh cloſer than a brother*, to whom I made my prayer; ſaying, *Plead thou my cauſe, O Lord, with them that ſtrive with me—fight againſt them that fight againſt me—ſtand up for mine help, and ſtop the way againſt them that perſecute me.*

The Apparitor being ſworn, and a citation held out to him, he was aſked (before he read a ſingle line of it) whether he had ſerved me with a copy of it. Without heſitation, he anſwered, " I did;" upon which I openly charged him with perjury. The Rev. Mr. BRISTOW then addreſſed himſelf to the Judge, " As I have been ſummoned by the Biſhop to appear here, and have material buſineſs of my own to mind, I hope you will let me be the firſt examined." Being ſworn, he depoſed (contrary to the expectation, and to the entire confuſion of my enemies) that my " Doctrine was perfectly conſonant to the word of GOD, and our church, as far as he could diſcern;" and that my " Prayers (tho' not taken from the liturgy) were decent, well compoſed, and ſeemed to be offered up with much fervency." I ſecretly bleſſed GOD for this convincing evidence,

evidence, and gave Mr. BRISTOW my public thanks, to which he replied, "Sir, I was on my oath, and only ſpoke according to my conſcience." The teſtimony of ſo reſpectable a clergyman, no doubt, greatly prepoſſeſſed all that were preſent in my favour: But my ſcheme of proving my innocence before a large audience, was now baffled; for the court was immediately adjourned to — a room, into which we were obliged to mount—by a ladder—drawn up, after a few people had hazarded their limbs in climbing.

Strange and unheard-of-aſcent to a court of judicature! I really then feared, I had got into the Inquiſition, where one man would be jury, judge, and executioner. However, *in the fear of the Lord is ſtrong confidence*, and knowing that *He ſitteth a king for ever*, and that *the hearts of all men are in his hands*, unto him I committed my cauſe.

Being unacquainted with the manner of proſecution in their court, and imagining the trial would not laſt more than one day—having alſo, no one to write down the depoſitions of the two witneſſes then examined, I cannot give as accurate a deſcription of the firſt day's proceedings as I could wiſh. By Mr. WARD's permiſſion, I requeſted the Biſhop to let me copy his notes, which were in his Lordſhip's poſſeſſion; informing him at the ſame time, that I was determined to publiſh an account of the trial, and would wiſh to do my proſecutors as much juſtice as the badneſs of their cauſe would admit. But he refuſed; therefore, ſome trifling circumſtances are, perhaps, omitted; but the principal particulars (as ſet down by myſelf in the court) are here recited.

JOHN

JOHN SEED,

Second Witneſs, on the part of the Proſecutors,

Swore, that, in *all* the Sermons he heard me preach, I repreſented God as an *inexorable* and ſevere Being, ready to plunge his creatures into everlaſting deſtruction, upon the ſlighteſt tranſgreſſion——that I aſſociated with people who were called Methodiſts, or Swadlers, but he could not tell what they were——that he never heard me preach in the fields, or in any other place, but a School-houſe in my own pariſh—that he ſaw ſix or ſeven fall into pretended fits, at two different times, while I was reading the leſſons in church—that he neither knew nor heard any thing about Mr. Abraham, only that he preached, one Sunday, in my church—that he heard me ſay I ſollicited ſubſcriptions for building ſome houſe or other, in the pariſh of Dunsford—that he was once going to diſcharge his children from coming to my church—that I preached falſe doctrines contrary to the Catholic faith——that he heard me ſay, "Adam died a ſpiritual and a temporal death, and, inſtead of a child of God, he became as black as the Devil," which greatly ſhocked him—that he moreover, heard me declare, that "Job, for holding up his ſelf-righteouſneſs, was obliged to offer up ſeven rams, and ſeven bullocks,"——that I took leſſons out of the Aprocrypha, which were not appointed for the day—that I made uſe of extemporary prayer before ſermon.

Croſs Examination.

That he was a tenant at will to Lord ———, but would have ſigned the petition whether Lord —— had, or not. That he was an ignorant man, but he believed

believed the meaning of the word *inexorable* to be, "A divine or a severe being,"—that *exorcise* was, "to mind what a body was doing,"——that he never knew me take upon me to cast out devils——that he was often with Lord ——— about the petition, but *could not recollect any of their conversation*——that, when he was lately giving up his accounts, as Church Warden, he said at the Vestry, "the man would be happy who was to succeed him, for he never served under such a gentleman,"——that he only said this, because I was so easy with him, at the time of distributing the poor-money.

HUGH STOGDALE,

Third Witness,

Swore, that I represented God as an *inexorable* and severe Being, ready to plunge his creatures into everlasting destruction, upon the slightest transgression——that I associated with people called Swadlers——that I preached out of the Church within the *precincts* of Ballyculter——that he saw many people fall into fits, which he knew to be pretended, because a man in the church told him, "that was little to what he would see, before service was over,"—that they went twice out of the church, on the same day——that he, also, went out, and saw James Bell, and a blind woman praying with them, in the church-yard—that I neglected to do my duty, for I did not read prayers, on the day after Christmas day, but went up to the Methodists in Lisburn—that I had a book to put people's names in, which I called the Lamb's book of life—That I preached doctrines derogatory to the goodness of a merciful God, for he heard me say, that "our church was fallen into Popery, and that our Bishops, Archdeacons,

deacons, Deans and Curates were a parcel of dumb dogs, that could not bark,"—that he never knew me take upon me to caſt out Devils, but he heard it ſaid—that Mr. Abraham came, and ſtaid at my houſe, for ſome time, and preached in my church—that he once beat one of his children for wanting to come to my church.

Croſs Examination.

That he was a tenant of Lord ——, without a leaſe, for forty years—that the meaning of the word *inexorable* was, "I thought myſelf better than others,"—that *exorciſe* was, *to bring people over to my way*—that he did not underſtand what the word *precincts* was—that an *enthuſiaſt* was, "one who was out of the way."

The Regiſter then deſired him to put his name to the notes he (the Regiſter) had written, which he immediately did, without the leaſt ſcruple, tho' he neither read them, nor heard them read. Oh, where was conſcience then? Was it not faſt aſleep?

Three times I was obliged to ſpeak to Mr. W—d, to take notice of that tranſaction, but he turned a deaf ear, and never gave me an anſwer; Mr. Marmion alſo, attempting to drown my voice, by calling out to the public crier, "adjourn the court—adjourn the court," which, accordingly, was adjourned to the 28th inſt. Thus, after riding near twenty miles, fourteen of my witneſſes were obliged to return home, ſome of whom could not be prevailed upon to come again; eſpecially as they were told by the P——r and R——r, that they were not obliged to anſwer the citations

citations I ſerved them with, becauſe they were the original ones, inſtead of copies. What a low piece of chicanery was this! was it not moſt ungenerous in Mr. Marmion, not to let me know the manner of preſenting them, though I requeſted it, and paid him twenty half crowns for them?

Being entirely ignorant of the common modes of law, much more of its quirks, my proſecutors had great advantage over me, all human aſſiſtance being engaged on their ſide. But, behold the care and and goodneſs of that God, who, it is ſaid, *laughs at the trial of the innocent!* He inclined the heart of a charitable lady to ſee two Attorneys for me (without my knowledge) who were a great reſtraint upon the P——r and J—e. By mere accident, alſo, I became acquainted with another, who attended the trial for two days, (gratis) and took down the depoſitions of the witneſſes. Some time before the court met again, he went with me to the Regiſter's office, and inſiſted on a ſight of the original petition, which he (the Regiſter) refuſed to produce in court. One, with much repugnance, was ſhewn him, when he declared he would ſwear (as far as he could judge of hand-writing) that all the ſignatures ſubjoined to it were written by the ſame hand. Mr. Marmion, at firſt, denied it vehemently, but the other ſtill perſiſting in it, he then ſaid, "well—I believe it is ſo, and if you call upon me, I will ſwear it, too. A real petition was ſent to my office; but, as it was not written on ſtamped paper, I could not receive it" Immediately, I informed the B——p that the petition, on which I was brought to trial, was a forged one; conſequently, that the whole proſecution was a nullity, there being no foundation to proceed on.

His Lordſhip *ſeemed* greatly ſurprized, and ſaid he could hardly believe it. Again I aſſured him of the truth of it; and if, upon enquiry, he found it to be ſo, hoped he would ſend me word that he had put a ſtop to all further proceedings againſt me. His anſwer was, "I know that an original petition was preſented to "me, but I will enquire into the matter."

The 74th Canon having enjoined "all who exerciſe eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction to appoint ſuch meet places for the keeping of their courts, as ſhall be convenient for entertainment of thoſe who are to make their appearance there," I, alſo, requeſted both the Biſhop and his Vicar General, to remove the court to Down, as being ſo contiguous to my pariſh. But, this was too great a favour to be granted. No doubt, it was imagined that many witneſſes would have appeared there in my behalf, who could, or would, not ride to a place ſo far diſtant as Knockbrieda: And, as the Judge lived within a mile of that village, to ſuit his convenience, I was put to great trouble and expence, and my witneſſes, moreover, wearied out with tedious journeys and adjournments; inſomuch that many, who had attended the court, at firſt, would not appear again.

Not hearing from the Biſhop as I expected, at the day appointed, the court met again, when

SAMUEL REED

Depoſed, that he was a pariſhioner of Ballyculter, and knew me—that I preached doctrines derogatory to *the Catholic faith*, and the goodneſs of a merciful God—that he heard me declare, in a ſermon, once, that people, after hearing prayers, receiving the Sacra-

ment,

ment, and reading the Bible to their family at night, were but mock Chriſtians ſtill—that I preached to my little flock, deſiring them to be no way concerned with other perſons, not even in eating, or drinking, or ſo much as touching cloathes—that he did not know whether the people I aſſociated with were Swadlers—that he ſaw ſome falling into pretended fits, in the pariſh church of Ballyculter, and that my ſcandalous behaviour was an offence to the pariſhioners—that on the people's falling into fits, I came out of the Miniſter's deſk to ſilence them, as they were ſhouting out, and deſiring the people to praiſe God—that, on two different Sundays, I read improper leſſons out of the book of Eſdras, the pariſh clerk (who always marked them every Sunday) having informed him of it—that I applied two ſeveral times to Lord ——— for fifty guineas to build a conventicle, as he was told by Lord ——— that, to his knowledge, I neglected my duty once; becauſe when I was wanted to marry a relation of his, I could not be found—that he had a ſon, between twelve and thirteen years of age, who, at the time of an oration I held in the church, was ſeized with a trembling, ſo that he (Deponent) was afraid for a long time, to let him go to church, but that he had, of late, gone there without any dread—that he himſelf did not then go there, nor had he been much in it, theſe ſeveral months, becauſe he did not like me, as I did not preach in the ſame manner the former Clergymen uſed to do—that he knew nothing elſe as to my preaching.

Croſs Examination.

That he was a tenant of Lord ———, without a leaſe, —that if Lord ——— had not encouraged the petition, he would—that the meaning of the words *Catholic faith* was,

was, "the Church of England,"—that he was a ſtranger to the word derogatory—that he was never aſked by the Proctor, or any other perſon, any of the queſtions then put to him, but that John Seed, and Hugh Stogdale, had often been with him, ſpeaking about the petition—that he knew the perſons who diſturbed the congregation only pretended to have fits, becauſe I, and others, came and ſpoke to them, after they came out of theſe fits—that *fits* are "irregular behaviour,"—that it was in the morning ſervice they fell into fits, and not during my ſermon—that he never conſulted with Dean Dickſon about being a witneſs.

JOHN STOGDALE,

Church Warden,

Swore, that he was a pariſhioner of Ballyculter, and knew me—that he ſaw people falling into fits, in the church, during ſervice, which gave offence to the pariſhioners at that time—that he was preſent when I exhorted, and prayed, in private houſes—that one Mr. Abraham preached in the church of Ballyculter—that he never knew me to neglect my duty, but that I was for weeks away from my pariſh, without any one to do my duty, except on a Sunday—that I told him unleſs he would withdraw his name from the petition, I would not adminiſter the Sacrament to him—that he heard Lord —— ſay I applied to him for money to build a conventicle, and that I would leave the pariſh—that many of my followers lived about Dunsford—that I did not much mind any of the pariſhioners but thoſe that followed me—that I was ready enough to go to any of the pariſhioners that aſked me—that he heard me ſay, if ever there was a Devil caſt out, it was caſt out of H—C.

Croſs

Croſs Examination.

That he had ſome land from his father, who is tenant at will to Lord ——; that the petition was ſent to him by Lord ——, who bid him go thro' the principal people of the pariſh with it—that he did not hate me, but believed that I preached true doctrines—that there were things in the petition he knew nothing about—that Lord —— was the firſt who ſigned it—that it was read to moſt, though not all, of the perſons who ſigned it—that ſome refuſed to ſign it, when applied to—that the perſons who ſigned it, without reading it, or hearing it read, gave no reaſons for their ſigning it—that he went to MOSES SEED, on hearing he was diſſatisfied that he had put his name to it, and told him he might withdraw his name, if he rued it—that he himſelf would never have ſigned the petition, if he had not been in the power of Lord —— that the charges of neglect of duty, and not making uſe of the liturgy of the church of Ireland, were not inſerted in the petition he ſigned—that old JOHN READ did not ſign it, tho' his name was down—that ſome ſigned in their father's names when they were abroad—that TORRENS STOGDALE'S name was put to it without his orders, but that he came, the following day, to ſign it—that ſome perſons, who did not actually ſign it, left orders to have their names put down—that THOMAS SEED ſigned for ADAM SEED—that he had ſome converſation about the petition with the Judge and Lord ——; that he loved me, if I would ſtick to the church—that I never was guilty of any neglect of duty, to his knowledge—that there were no ſuch men in the pariſh as JOHN LEGACY, or SAMUEL DOWNEY, whoſe names were in the petition which, alſo, was ſigned by ſome Preſbyterians—

that JOHN SPRAT was never aſked to ſign the petition, becauſe he was a Preſbyterian—that he never knew me to have a book which I called the book of life—that he heard from different perſons his father threatened him, if he would not ſign the petition—that he never heard me repreſent GOD as a ſevere Being, ready to plunge his creatures into everlaſting deſtruction upon the ſlighteſt tranſgreſſion; but, on the contrary, as a merciful GOD, ready to receive every returning ſinner—that he ſaw perſons who followed me fall into fits more than once, but not in the church—that he heard ſome perſons ſay, I was unjuſtly dealt by—that he went to hear me preach in private houſes, becauſe he liked what was good—that the meaning of the word *fits* was "convulſion fits, inflicted by GOD Almighty"—that Lord —— ſent a man to him, on a Sunday, deſiring him to ſet off immediately for Liſburn, but the man did not tell him what he was to do there—that he was not with any perſon in Liſburn, conſulting about what he could ſwear relative to the petition.

Having cloſely interrogated him as to this laſt point, and receiving no ſatisfactory anſwer, I obſerved, "It was a moſt ſtrange and unaccountable thing, that he, and two others, ſhould ride to Liſburn, by order of Lord ——, without having ſome kind of buſineſs to tranſact there." The Proctor, then (fearing that the plot would be diſcovered, when the next witneſs came to be examined) thought it beſt to confeſs, that two or three people were with him, the night before, and that he deſired them to ſwear nothing contrary to their conſcience. I then accuſed the deponent of perjury; upon which, he replied, "I did not think I was upon my

my oath, on the croſs examination." Knowing that he had a ſincere regard for me (tho' he was afraid to avow it) I imagined that his conſcience ſtung him, and that he would retract part of his teſtimony; therefore, began to repeat ſome of the queſtions I had aſked him at firſt.—But he ſaid, "I don't draw back from any thing I have ſworn, except that of not being in company with Mr. PERRY, laſt night." Perceiving how ſtrongly the fear of man operated upon him, I was obliged to proceed on the croſs examination, when he farther depoſed,

—That, early on Sunday morning, he was deſired by SAMUEL SEED, to go along with him to Mr. PERRY's, and that it was Lord ——'s orders, who had given him a horſe to carry him to Liſburn—that he would not have wiſhed me out of the cure, at the time he ſigned the petition—that he heard ſeveral ſay my preaching was effectual (under GOD) in turning them from drunkenneſs, ſwearing, lying, and other crimes—that he, and his brother church-warden, went to Lord —— to ſpeak about the petition, before it was ſigned by any one, as they did not underſtand it.

WILLIAM SEED.

Then ſwore, that he was a church-warden of Ballyculter, and knew me—that he ſaw ſome perſons fall into convulſion fits, in the church, during morning ſervice, but did not know whether they were pretended, or real fits—that it was ſome ſhock to him to ſee perſons ſo affected in the church, and that it offended ſome of the other pariſhioners—that he heard me preach and exhort at Killough and Kircubbin, which are not in Ballyculter pariſh—that the pariſh got better attendance

ſince I became curate, than it ever did before—that he never knew me to leave the pariſh without ſomebody to do the occaſional duties, and that the church was never without ſervice on Sundays—that the part of the pariſh in which he lived was greatly troubled with ſickneſs, and that no curate, in his remembrance, ever attended the ſick ſo conſtantly as I did—that he heard me tell his fellow church-warden, I would never adminiſter the Sacrament to him, if he put his hand to the petition—that he was no judge whether I was, or was not, a proper perſon to take care of a pariſh, but he ſuppoſed I was, becauſe I had, hitherto, taken better care of them than any miniſter they ever had—that there was a diviſion in the pariſh, on account of Methodiſm, or Swadling—that the Judge ſent for him before the trial to Lord ——'s houſe, where he took the oath of a church-warden.

Croſs Examination.

That he never knew me take upon me to caſt out Devils, or ever heard of my doing it—that he never heard me preach doctrines derogatory to the goodneſs of GOD, but that I always repreſented him as very merciful to repenting ſinners—that every thing I ſaid was out of the old, or new, teſtament—that he did not know from whom the petition came, but he got it from his fellow church-warden—that, in two days after, they went to Lord —— to get him to ſign it—that he never would have ſigned it, if Lord —— had not—that all the perſons who ſigned it, did not read it, or hear it read—that he had a ſecond paper in his hand, which he ſhewed to the perſons whom he aſked to ſign the petition, and told them, if they did not ſign it, he would put their names down in that paper, thereby giving

ing them to underſtand that he would ſhew it to Lord —— that he called that paper the black book to ſeveral, and his reaſon for calling it ſo was, becauſe he was about black work—that ſeveral perſons, at whoſe houſes they called, denied themſelves, for fear of being aſked to ſign the petition, tho' he knew they were in the houſe—that only one perſon to whom they applied refuſed to ſign it—that he believed no perſon would have ſigned it, if Lord —— had not firſt done it—that he did not doubt but that, on the Sunday he ſhewed the petition to me, he told me he would have nothing to do with it—that he heard the other church-warden begging me to forgive him, if he ſhould ſign the petition, as his living depended on Lord —— that he heard him, alſo, expreſs a great love for me—that he was ſorry he ſigned the petition when he had done it—that neither old JOHN READ, nor JAMES MOOR, ſigned it—that ſome ſigned in their fathers names, when they were abſent—that he believed THOMAS SEED ſigned in ADAM SEED'S name, and was no relation to him—that Lord —— never told him he would hurt the people who did not ſign the petition—that he did not know either JOHN LEGACY or SAMUEL DOWNEY—that ſome Preſbyterians ſigned it—that JOHN SPRAT (who is one) refuſed at firſt to ſign it, but afterwards did—[N. B. This contradicts the affirmation of the other church-warden]—that he never ſaw me with a book which I called the book of life—that he never ſaw any perſon falling into fits (ſo called) more than once in the church—that Mr. AUCHINLECK did not read the petition when he ſigned it—that this clauſe—"And, alſo, neglects doing his duty in ſaid pariſh as a clergyman and curate ought," and this other, "without making uſe of the liturgy of the

the church of Ireland" were not in the petition he ſigned—that he choſe to go to hear me when I preached out of the pariſh, becauſe he liked me—that he went, on Sunday, to Liſburn, by Lord ——'s direction (as he ſuppoſed) but, at the time of his ſetting out, he did not know where he was going, or what he was to do, being led blind-fold, as he often was before—that he was in Liſburn with Mr. PERRY, but could not [i. e. would not] tell the converſation that paſſed, ſave that Mr. PERRY aſked him what he could ſwear—that he knew ſeveral perſons who were turned from drunkenneſs, ſwearing, lying, and other vices, by my preaching—that he was poſitive the generality of the pariſhioners liked me, and that he never heard a man preach, in all his life, that he liked ſo well.

Knowing how implacable the reſentment of *the natural man* is, leſt any of thoſe who have born teſtimony for me ſhould be deprived of their little ſubſiſtence, I think it adviſeable to conceal their names, as it can be of no conſequence to the publick to know them.

Firſt Witneſs, for me,

Swore, that he never knew me take upon me to caſt out devils, or to preach doctrines derogatory to the goodneſs of GOD—that he frequently heard me preach in my own pariſh-church, and that I always repreſented GOD as a merciful Being, ready to pardon every returning ſinner—that he knew ſeveral perſons who were turned from the common vices of the age, by my preaching—that he went along with me to thirty different perſons, who ſigned the petition, to know their reaſon for ſo doing.

As

As it was impoſſible for any man, of the moſt retentive memory, to recite the various acknowledgments of ſuch a number of people, he produced a paper in court, containing them, which had been written at the time of their ſeveral confeſſions. But neither the judge nor proctor would allow him to read it; nor was I ſuffered to aſk him (what they called) a leading queſtion, ſo that he was obliged to ſpeak only in general terms. Therefore, I ſhall tranſcribe the writing, as it will clearly evince the deſpotiſm of a certain GREAT man, and the unwillingneſs of thoſe who were ſubſervient to him to *put their hands with the wicked to be unrighteous witneſſes againſt me.*

ROBERT JOHNSON confeſſed, that he had no other fault to find to Mr. SMYTH, than that he kept company with theſe people.

BERNARD COULTER confeſſed, that he neither read the petition, nor heard it read, before his ſigning it—that the church-wardens told him he would be turned out of his land at All-Saints, if he did not ſign it, and aſked if they ſhould read it to him. He replied "No—for I am convinced it is a pack of lies, but ſince I *muſt* ſign it, I will." He alſo ſaid, that the church-wardens were in drink, and that Lord —— out of cunning, did not put his name in the firſt row, but in the ſecond, tho' he was the firſt perſon that ſigned. He ſaid, the petition was carried about ſo ſuddenly, that he had no time to conſider of it; and that the church-wardens, ſhewing him two papers, told him if he did not ſign one of them (meaning the petition) they would write his name in the other. He ſaid that he afterwards heard it read, and that there was no mention in it of neglect of duty.

SAMUEL

SAMUEL TORNEY ſaid, he loved Mr. SMYTH from the bottom of his ſpirit, and ſo did his wife, who cried bitterly, and wiſhed he had been 20 miles off. "And I'm ſure (ſaid he) I would rather have gone ten mile and five to it, than have ſigned the petition; but the church-wardens brought out two papers, and told me if I did not ſign the one, they would put my name in the other, and that my bit of land would be taken from me. But I refuſed, and they came in a ſecond time, and aſked me would I bring my family to beggary? So what could I do between the two?"

JOHN FOSTER ſaid, that he did not read the petition, but he heard it, and that he believed ſome things were true, and ſome were falſe. His wife ſaid ſhe believed he did not well know what he was doing, for he was drunk at the time, as he often was.

JOHN SPRAT ſaid, the church-wardens told him that they muſt give in his name to Lord —— if he would not ſign the petition; but he told them he would not, for that it was no concern of his, as he was a Preſbyterian, and that the petition was a pack of nonſenſe and lies. But, the next day, his wife and many of his friends, fell on him, and told him he would loſe his land, ſo that he was obliged to ſign it.

JOHN QUAIL confeſſed, that he ſigned the petition, being afraid to go againſt Lord —— but that it was againſt his conſcience, and he was ſure there were not ſix perſons in the pariſh that ſigned it with their wills, and he had rather than all the world he had not done it.

MOSES

MOSES SEED, on being aſked by Mr. SMYTH if he would go and be a witneſs againſt him, replied, "No —if I be not a witneſs for you, I will never be one againſt you; for I can find no fault with you but that you go to the people of Dunsford."

HUGH SEED confeſſed, that he never ſaw any thing by Mr. SMYTH but what was good, and that he would go on his bare knees to the place where he was to be tried, if it would do him any ſervice—that he could follow Mr. SMYTH all over the world; but that he was afraid of loſing the little cabbin over his children's heads, as the church-wardens told him he would rue it, if he did not ſign the paper. He aſked if there was any treaſon in it, and if he might read it. On being given into his hands he ſaw no writing againſt Mr. SMYTH, but only Lord ——'s name, and three or four more, on which, he wrote his name.

ADAM SEED ſaid, he was not at home when the petition was brought, and that if it had been offered to him fifty times, he would not have ſigned it; but (as he heard) a young boy, THOMAS SEED, ſigned it in his name, out of a jeſt.

THOMAS ORR ſaid, he was grieved he had ſigned the petition; but as there was a current report that all who refuſed ſigning would be turned out of their lands, he complied. He confeſſed he had nothing to ſay againſt Mr. SMYTH, and that he never heard him preach any where but in the church, and that there was no mention of neglect of duty in the petition he ſigned, at leaſt he did not remember it.

JOHN

JOHN PRESS said, the only reason he had for signing it, was, on account of some discourse that JAMES BELL had.

JOHN READ (the younger) confessed, that he never read the petition, nor heard it read—that he never knew any harm by Mr. SMYTH, but that the church-wardens told him he *must* sign it. He replied he could not sign it, but they might do it, if they would.

WILLIAM AGNEW (a Presbyterian) said, he had no fault to find with Mr. SMYTH, and on being pressed to tell why he signed the petition, he said he could not tell, and that he did not hear above three lines of it read.

JOHN COATS, NICHOLAS COATS, and RICHARD COATS (masons) said, that the church-wardens told them, that they would never be permitted to work another stroke under Lord ——, if they would not sign the petition.

JAMES MOOR said, he was abroad when the petition went about, and that he could find no fault with Mr. SMYTH.

THOMAS COATS, denied his ever signing the petition.

MOSES SEED confessed, that if he had no children, he would rather have travelled, than have signed the petition, and that all he had to say was, that Mr. SMYTH enlightened the gospel more than any man under the Sun, that ever he heard. The church-wardens

dens told him they must tell Lord ——— who would be a Methodist, and who not.

ISAAC WALSH swore by his conscience, that he would be sorry to do Mr. SMYTH the least detriment, and that he would not take Lord ———'s estate to swear to all that was in the petition.

WILLIAM SEED (church-warden) said, that he believed Mr. R—H W—D brought down the petition to C—le—d, and that there was not the third part of what was in it at first.

JOHN KEOWN said, he would be very sorry to do Mr. SMYTH any hurt, and that he never saw the petition, but one of his sons signed it in his name. He said he never saw the man that turned his heart to GOD as much as Mr. SMYTH did these two years.

JAMES SMYTH said, that Lord ——— sent his servants to threaten him.

JOHN SMYTH said, that he never saw a man in the pulpit he liked so well as Mr. SMYTH, to that day.

RICHARD HUGHES, on being asked why he signed the petition, replied, "if Lord — said the sky was white, we must say so too." The church-wardens pulled out two papers, and told him if he did not sign the petition, they would put his name down in the black book. He also said, Mr. SMYTH was the best Parish-Minister he ever set his eyes on, but he was in fear of losing his home.

TERENCE

TORRENS STOGDALE ſaid, on hearing the church-wardens were coming about, he went from home, and if they had not been ſo near him, he would have been fifteen miles off the next day—that he had a big value for Mr. SMYTH, from the firſt day he ſaw him, to that day—that on his return home, when he heard they threatened his family ſo hard, he went after them and ſigned the petition. His wife ſaid, that they deſired his ſon to ſign for him, but ſhe would not let him, for that every one in the houſe had a real love for Mr. SMYTH. They then ſaid, "Well—here's another paper, and his name muſt be put in that." It was the voice of the country (ſhe ſaid) that whoever did not ſign the petition muſt go headlong.

Old JOHN POLLY being aſked by Mr. SMYTH what made him ſign the petition, anſwered, "Ignorance, I knew nothing about the matter. I wiſh you well, and ſo does all the pariſh. I neither read it, nor heard it read."

WILLIAM POLLY ſaid, that he argued with the church-wardens above an hour, when they were threatning him that he would be turned out of his holding and place, if he did not ſign the petition. They told him, alſo, that it would ſave his two ſons who hid themſelves, and aſked him what harm his ſigning could do, when ſo many did it.

FRANCIS MC. CREEDY ſaid, that he always liked Mr. SMYTH well, and that he ſaw no petition againſt him—that he only put his name in a paper, where there were ſome other names.

Old

Old JOHN READ ſaid, he never ſigned the petition, and that he would rather ſee himſelf half-hanged firſt. On being told his name was in it, he replied, "Then, the De'el cut off the hands of them that put it there."

THOMAS BARTLETT ſaid, that Mr. PIT deſired him to ſign the paper which the church-wardens had, in his father's name, on which he put down his own name by miſtake, not knowing what was in the petition; but when he afterwards heard it read, he was ſo aſhamed of himſelf that he would not come to hear prayers in Mr. SMYTH's houſe, as uſual.

Tueſday, October 29, 1776.

Second Witneſs

Depoſed, that he was a tenant at will to Lord ——— that he never heard me repreſent GOD as a ſevere Being, &c. but merciful to all repenting ſinners—that, as far as he knew, I never preached any doctrines contrary to the eſtabliſhed Church of Ireland—that he never ſaw, nor heard of my having, any book which I called the Book of Life, but that he heard me, ſometimes, pray, that the names of the perſons preſent might be written in the Lamb's Book of Life—that he never ſaw any one in fits, ſo called—that it was the general report of the country the pariſhioners ſigned the petition againſt their conſciences—that he thought I was well qualified to preach, and be a Miniſter—that ſeveral have been brought from drunkenneſs and ſwearing, to love GOD—that he himſelf was greatly reformed by my preaching—that I exhorted people to have a concern for their ſouls, and to attend their pariſh-church—that the pariſh was better ſerved ſince I became Curate, than ever it was before; but that, lately, I did not attend

tend it as well as I uſed to do—that he believed I was as able, and willing, to do my duty, as any man, if I was preſent to do it—that he never knew me neglect to do my duty, when called upon—that he believed all the pariſhioners had great love and reſpect for me, except ſix or ſeven perſons—that he never heard me take upon me to caſt out Devils, nor knew of my refuſing the Sacrament to any perſon.

Croſs Examination.

That he never was inſtructed by any perſon, in what he was to ſay in court—that he never was with me when I preached in fields, or houſes.

Third Witneſs

Depoſed, that he was a pariſhioner of Ballyculter—that he was aſked by the church-wardens to ſign a petition againſt me, which he refuſed, becauſe there were many things in it, which he was unacquainted with—that they then told him, if he would not ſign it, they would put his name in the black book, and that Lord —— told them no Methodiſt ſhould live under him, and that he would look upon all who did not ſign the petition to be Methodiſts—that he then replied, he would ſooner cut off his right arm than ſign it—that he attended the church as frequently as any other perſon, and always heard me repreſent GOD as moſt merciful and gracious—that he never heard of my having a book called the Book of Life—that he heard his own father confeſs, he ſigned the petition againſt his conſcience, and it was the general report of the country, that moſt of the people did—that he highly eſteemed me as a Miniſter—that many people had confeſſed to him (and he believed it to be true) that they were

were converted by means of my preaching from drunkenneſs, ſwearing, lying, &c.—that I never (as he believed) took any improper means to reclaim them—that he always underſtood I preached agreeable to the articles of the Church of England—that he truſted he was himſelf greatly reformed—that he never was acquainted with any Curate who attended his pariſh ſo well as me—that he never knew me neglect any duty I was called to do—that he believed all the pariſhioners, except ſix, ſeven, or eight perſons, loved and reſpected me—that many of them told him they wiſhed I was to continue their Miniſter—that he never knew me take upon me to caſt out Devils, nor to refuſe the Sacrament to any perſon; but that he heard me ſay I knew not how to give it to the perſons who ſigned the petition—that he read the petition, and neither the charge of neglect of duty, or not making uſe of the liturgy of the Church of Ireland was in it—that he heard HUGH STOGDALE ſwear he would beat JAMES BELL, if ever he came to Ballyculter Church, though it ſhould be in my preſence—that he held ſaid STOGDALE in the church-yard, or he believed STOGDALE would then have beat BELL with a cudgel he had in his hand—that he ſaw STOGDALE in the church ſince that time, but not when I preached.

Croſs Examination.

That he heard I often went out of the pariſh, but he was never with me when I preached abroad—that he heard I was once abſent when a pair was to be married—that, from converſation he held with moſt of the people who ſigned the petition, he believed they were ſorry for it—that he believed the reaſon of the diſpute between STOGDALE and BELL, was on account of jealouſy,

jealouſy, and Stogdale's having got too much drink at a funeral.

Fourth Witneſs

Swore that he lived in Ballyculter—that he was aſked to ſign a petition againſt me, but did not—that he heard me preach almoſt as often as any man in the pariſh, and always heard me declare, that ſinners, without repentance, would be damned, but that I preached to repenting ſinners, ſo much the more comfort, and repreſented God as ready to forgive them—that he never ſaw me with a book which I called the Book of Life, except the Bible—that he never heard of any perſons, in the church, having the fits, (ſo called) more than one day; but, once, hearing of ſuch a thing, he ran from home to the church-yard, and heard people clapping their hands, and praiſing God—that he believed, that was what was uſually called fits by the common people——that he heard his own father, and many other people, ſay that they ſigned the petition againſt their conſciences, and that they were afraid of being turned out of their farms, if they refuſed to ſign it——that he believed more was laid to Lord ——'s charge than he was guilty of—that he heard one man confeſſing that the Church Wardens aſked him to ſign the petition, and on his refuſal, they replied, "well then, you muſt walk," to which he anſwered "where muſt I walk? To Germany? aye, I will go to Jeruſalem, rather than ſign it,"——that he (Deponent) never heard a man ſpeak he would ſo ſoon hear as me——that he highly eſteemed me, and that the majority of the pariſh exclaimed againſt the petition——that he believed, if matters were made up between Lord —— and

and me, it would be neceſſary to build a gallery in the church, on account of the numbers that came there; and that there would not be ſuch a pariſh within a great way, or any man more eſtabliſhed than me—that he thought my preaching had ſuppreſſed a deal of vice, and that it ſtruck him more than any he had ever heard, and hoped in God his outward and inward life was changed——that I attended my pariſh better than any former Curate——that he never knew me neglect any duty I was called to do——that he believed the generality of the pariſh would wiſh to have me continued as their Miniſter, and he had the voice of the people to found his belief on——that he heard me once ſay (on being aſked whether I could caſt out devils) "I could not, for I only threw the ſeed, or the bread, upon the waters, and God gave the increaſe,"—that he never heard I refuſed the Sacrament to any perſon that aſked for it——that a much greater number of perſons attended as Communicants ſince I became Curate——that Hugh Stogdale was in a rage one Sunday, and going to beat James Bell for coming to the church—that he did not know whether Stogdale afterwards came to the church, as it was generally crouded, and it was hard to miſs any perſon out of it.

Croſs Examination.

That he heard the occaſion of Stogdale's averſion to Bell was, that he was a Swadler, or Methodiſt.

Fifth Witneſs

Swore that he was a pariſhioner of Ballyculter—that the Church Wardens brought a petition to him, but they did not threaten him, tho' he ſcrupled to ſign it—but

but that one of them told him, if he did not, his name should be put down in the black book, upon which, for fear of displeasing Lord ——— he did sign it; but if he had not seen Lord —'s name, his should not have been there——that his Father had a lease from Lord —— that when he (Deponent) went to any place of worship, it was to my church; and that he always heard me represent God as a merciful Being, &c.—that he never heard I had any book which I called the book of life, or any other book, while I was preaching or praying, but the Bible, or Testament—that what I preached was always good, as far as he had understanding to judge of it——that he believed I preached agreeable to the doctrines of the Church of Ireland, and that he never heard any man he liked so well——that it was the general report of the country most of the petitioners signed against their conscience———that he gave a slight look over the petition before he signed it, and that he did not understand parts of it——that he had a good right to believe I attended my parish as a Curate ought to do, because I went, last Easter Sunday, to see his father, when unwell, and gave him the Sacrament, though it must have been inconvenient to me ——— that he believed if Lord ——— was satisfied with me, all the parish would be so, and there were but three or four displeased with me then, namely Hugh Stogdale, Samuel Seed, and John Seed—that he never knew me to neglect any duty I was called to do——nor to refuse the Sacrament to any person that offered—that there were many more Communicants (he thought) than there used to be, before I was Curate.

Cross

and

Croſs Examination.

That he never knew Lord ——— and me to have any diſpute, but it was the report of the country that we had—that he believed the reaſon why ſome of the pariſhioners diſliked me, was, becauſe I kept company with Methodiſts, or Swadlers, and held conventicles with them.

Sixth Witneſs

Depoſed, that he was a tenant at will to Lord ——— and a pariſhioner of Ballyculter—that he heard the Church Wardens were at his houſe with a petition, but he was not at home—that John Stogdale afterwards read the petition to him, and aſked him to ſign it; but he replied if he was to leave Caſtlemoughan the next day, he would not—that the Church Warden then told him Lord ——— directed him to go about the pariſh with the petition that he might know who was for, or againſt, him—that he was ſurely convinced many things in it were lies—that he attended his pariſh-church almoſt every Sunday ſince I became Curate, and never heard me repreſent God as a ſevere Being, &c. but, on the contrary, as a merciful God, &c.—that he never heard of my having a book called the book of life—that he never heard of any perſons falling into fits more than one day—that a woman once fainted in the church, but he could not tell the reaſon—that the church was then greatly crouded, as it generally was—that he believed the only foundation for ſaying the people fell into fits, was, that they ſpoke loud in the church, praiſing the Lord—that he heard ſome people confeſs they ſigned the petition againſt their conſciences, particularly I— S——— who ſaid, he would rather have broke his finger than have ſigned it, but that he

could not help ſigning it— that he (Deponent) highly eſteemed me as a Miniſter, and that my preaching had been effectual (under God) in turning him, and many others, from drunkenneſs, ſwearing, lying, &c.—that to the beſt of his opinion, the two charges of neglect of duty, and not making uſe of the liturgy of the Church of Ireland, were not in the petition—that I attended my duty a great deal better than any former Curate—that he never knew me neglect any duty I was called to do—that when I firſt came into the pariſh, he heard my preſent greateſt enemies ſay, they eſteemed me above all men—that he thought I had not above ſix or ſeven enemies—that he never heard me take upon me to caſt out devils, nor knew me to refuſe the Sacrament to any perſon that offered—that Hugh Stogdale went out of the church, one Sunday, during ſervice, (as he believed, to a funeral) and that he (Stogdale) was at the church-door when ſervice was over, where he was brandiſhing his ſtick in a threatning manner, and ſwearing that he would beat James Bell, or any of his clan, if they ever came again to the Church—that no perſon aſſiſted him, but rather prevented him, and that he appeared to be in liquor—that moſt of the people who ſigned the petition regularly ſent their children to my pariſh church.

Croſs Examination.

That neither I, nor any other perſon, aſked him what he could ſay, before he was produced in court—that ſome of the pariſhioners gave out that their diſlike to me was on account of my going out of the pariſh, and preaching in fields and barns, and holding conventicles——that he underſtood a conventicle to be a houſe, or ſomething like it.

Seventh

Seventh Witneſs

Swore that he was a pariſhioner of Ballyculter—that the Church Wardens brought a petition to his father, who was not at home—that they deſired him to ſign in his father's name, but that, thro' miſtake, he put his own name to it——that he never read the petition, nor heard it read, nor did he know the conſequence of ſigning it—that he was an apprentice-boy, without houſe, or land—that the reaſon for his ſigning the petition, was, becauſe he ſaw ſo many names to it——that he did not believe his father would have ſigned it, if he had read it—that he highly eſteemed me as a Miniſter.

Eighth Witneſs

Swore, that he was a pariſhioner of Ballyculter, and tenant at will to Lord ——— that he heard the Church Wardens brought a petition to his houſe, when he was not at home—that he was informed his name was ſigned to the petition, but that he never conſented to it, nor did he hear the petition read—that he approved of me, and the doctrines I taught, which he believed to be agreeable to the eſtabliſhed Church—that he was told it was an apprentice-boy that put down his name—that he never knew me to refuſe the Sacrament to any perſon that offered—that he believed all the pariſhioners, except Hugh Stogdale, John Seed, and Samuel Seed, would die for me—that I was better qualified for preaching than any man he ever heard——that no perſon was ever told by him what he could ſay upon the trial—that he never heard me repreſent God as a ſevere Being, &c. but always the contrary—that my preaching had altered the pariſh very much for the better—that he always found me more ready to do my duty

than any other Curate, and that I did more than my duty, as I gave out wine and medicines to the ſick—that there was a very great increaſe of communicants at the Lord's Supper, ſince I became Miniſter.

Croſs Examination.

That he did not know whether the diſlike of the three perſons mentioned in his depoſition proceeded from my preaching in the fields, or not.

The court was then adjourned to the 6th day of November, and was to be held at Hill-hall, at eleven o'clock. Before my return home, an Attorney and I waited on the B——p, requeſting him to ſhew the original petition which had been preſented to him. He aſſured me it was not in his poſſeſſion, but that I ſhould *ſee it*, the next morning. Going to his L—p's houſe, at the appointed hour, after waiting, a conſiderable time, in the parlour, he ſent his nephew to inform me, that the petition was in the hands of Mr. Marmion. Repairing to him, he refuſed, with much rudeneſs, to ſhew it; upon which I wrote as follows to the B—p.

'My Lord,

'AGREEABLE to your Lordſhip's permiſſion yeſterday, I waited on you, this morning, for a ſight of the 'original petition againſt me, and was referred by Mr. 'Trail to Mr. Marmion, in whoſe poſſeſſion (he ſaid) 'it was. When I went, with my Attorney, to the 'Regiſter's office, he told us he would ſhew no other 'petition than that already exhibited, which he himſelf 'confeſſed he believed to be written by one hand.

'As

'As, therefore, your Lordſhip informed me you had 'received a petition ſigned by different hands, and pro- 'miſed me oyer of it, I hope you will fulfil your word 'paſſed to,

'My Lord,

'your Lordſhip's moſt reſpectful

'humble ſervant,

'EDWARD SMYTH."

He ſaid, he would ſend an anſwer; and, in about five hours after, Mr. Trail came to me, and told me, that the B———p had given Mr. Marmion orders to let me have a *copy* of the petition, which was all he could do.

Reader, what concluſion will you draw from this circumſtance? Surely, you will not charge the RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD with a breach of his word.

Well—I found I muſt be ſatisfied with a copy, which, accordingly, was given me. But, would you think it? It differed greatly from the one I was firſt ſerved with, out of the very ſame office; having two additional charges, and five names leſs than the other. Are you given to meditation? Then ponder theſe things a little. But don't be of ſuch a bloody mind as to ſentence any of the petitioners to the gallows, for a trifling, petty forgery—No, no—cut them not down in their ſins—*peradventure, God will give them repentance, that they may recover themſelves out of the ſnare of the Devil.*

Before the next court-day, I obtained the three following certificates.

'SOME time lately paſt, the Church Wardens of 'Ballyculter, came to me, and aſked me to ſign a peti-'tion againſt the Rev. Mr. Smyth, Curate of ſaid pa-'riſh, which I abſolutely refuſed, as I am a Diſſenter, 'and had no objection to the Gentleman's doctrine; but 'fooliſh people intimidated my wife, and overperſuaded 'me to put my hand to it, which was it to do again, I 'would not do it. I really, and ſincerely, believe the 'ſaid Rev. Mr. Smyth teaches, and practices, what he 'thinks agreeable to the word of God, and his 'duty.

Raholp, October 31ſt. JOHN SPRAT."

'THE Church Wardens of Ballyculter came to 'my houſe with a petition againſt Mr. Smyth, and de-'ſired me to put my hand to it—I refuſed to do it, as I 'did not know whether it was right; but they ſaid, 'there is Lord ———'s name to it, and if you don't 'ſign it, we will return your name in another paper, 'ſo I might take my choice. Being overperſuaded, I 'ſigned it; but I am now ſorry for it, and I believe, 'as far as I know, that Mr. Smyth is a good man, and 'preaches doctrines agreeable to the Church of Ire-'land, and I wiſh he was to be continued our Mini-'ſter,

October 31ſt, SAMUEL TOURNEY."

'ONE of the Church Wardens came to me, and 'aſked me if I would ſign my name to a petition—after 'making him read it, I made ſome objections, telling 'him

'him there was very little in it I knew any thing about,
'and that I liked what I heard in the church very well.
'He replied, if you do not put your name to it, I will
'put it down in another paper for you, and perhaps
'Lord B——— will not let you work under him—
'being, therefore, afraid, I signed it; but am now sorry
'for it, as I never saw a Minister I had a better liking to
'than Mr. Smyth.

"NICHOLAS COATS."

On the day appointed, I went to Hill-hall, before the hour of eleven, but (to my great surprize) was informed that Mr. Ward and Mr. Marmion had been already there, and left it above an hour, but were to meet there again, on that day se'nnight. Though this adjournment was previously intended, the J—e had neither humanity, nor courtesy enough, to give me notice of it; therefore I was obliged to ride above forty miles: And had not an express been sent by one of my friends, all my witnesses must have endured the same fatigue, and my expence have been considerably increased. Oh, when will even Ministers learn, practise, and inculcate that golden rule, *whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for, this is the law and the Prophets?* Tho' sufficient witnesses had been already produced to prove my innocence, yet, as a farther corroboration, I was desirous of bringing more: Accordingly, nine persons promised faithfully to appear in my favour. But, alas! tho' *the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak*, and the fear of man prevailed over the fear of God. For, behold! Lord ———'s bailiff went to the house of one, who had before *witnessed a good confession* for me, and told him that his Lordship desired he might pro-

vide another houſe for himſelf. Two other men, alſo, being threatened, were not only afraid to come themſelves, but ſtrongly adviſed others to ſtay at home, or their families would be ruined. Notwithſtanding this, four had the courage to fulfil their promiſes, tho' they hazarded their *all*. Should they be called to *ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake*, may the Lord give them *an hundred fold here, and in the world to come, eternal life!*

HILL-HALL, *November* 13th, 1776.

Ninth Witneſs

Depoſed, that he ſerved Mr. Marmion with a letter containing the following words.

'DEAR SIR, *Liſburn, Nov. 7th*, 1776.

'HAVING ſtrong reaſons to ſuſpect that the petition, on which I have been brought to a trial, is forged: 'I hereby require you, as Regiſter of the dioceſe, to 'bring the petition into court, on the next day it ſhall 'be held, that the hand-writing may be examined, and 'witneſſes may declare whether they ſigned it, or not.

'I am, Dear Sir,

'your very humble ſervant,

'EDWARD SMYTH."

To Mr. *Henry Marmion.*

Mr. Marmion being then aſked to give his anſwer to the letter, refuſed, and would aſſign no reaſon—Depoent further ſwore, that he took a note from me to Mr. Marmion, requiring a copy of the original petition, which was given him, and that there were only 57 names

names ſubjoined—that theſe two clauſes were not in it, "without making uſe of the liturgy of the Church of Ireland—and alſo neglects doing his duty in ſaid pariſh, as a Clergyman, and Curate ought."

I, then, produced the copy of a petition, which was ſent me along with the citation, which deponent ſwore had thoſe two clauſes in it, and *ſixty-two* names ſubſcribed to it. Mr. Marmion ſaid he knew nothing about it, and that he never ſent it. Being iſſued from his office, and ſigned by his ſon, I thought it my duty, as a Miniſter, calmly to remind him of the words of St. John, *All Liars ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone.*

Tenth Witneſs

Swore that he had often heard R—— P—— expreſs the greateſt regard for me, and that he would have been a witneſs for me that day, but he told deponent, the day before, he heard he would be turned out of his bit of land, if he went againſt Lord —— and was, therefore, afraid of his ſmall children—— that R—— P—— and he are tenants at will to Lord ——, that the Church Wardens brought a petition to his houſe to ſign, which they read to him—that, on his refuſing to ſign it, they told him they would put him in the black book, when he replied, "you may put my name where you will, but I cannot, for conſcience-ſake, ſign that paper,"—that he attended my Church as often as poſſible, and always heard me declare, that God was very merciful, and ſlow to anger, willing to pardon all that came unto him by repentance—that he had been often at my houſe, when I had pri-

vate prayer—that I had a bit of paper, where his name, and many others, were written; out of which I aſked them, one after one, how they lived, and hoped that all whoſe names were in it, would be written in the book of life———that I always encouraged them to hold ſuch meetings—that a great many were reclaimed, and turned from their ſins, as well as himſelf—that I always attended my duty better than any other Miniſter in his memory—that he was in church the day they ſa'd people were ſeized with fits—that he heard them crying out, "praiſe the Lord,"—that he never roſe off his knees, until they went out of the church, and that this happened before ſermon—that I never was guilty of any neglect of duty to his knowledge—that my doctrines were agreeable to the eſtabliſhed church, as far as he could underſtand—that the pariſhioners, in general, loved and regarded me—that, for his part, he loved me ſo well, he could carry me on his back by day, and put me in his boſom at night, and that, if it was poſſible, he would die for me.

Croſs Examination

That he never knew me take upon me to caſt out devils.

Eleventh Witneſs.

Depoſed that he did not ſign any petition, but believed his name was in it—— that he ſaw the Church Wardens coming to his houſe with it, but he went out of the way becauſe he was not willing to put his hand to it—that they told his wife (as ſhe informed him) they would put him in the black book, if he would not ſign it—that he attended my church as often as he could

could, and that he always heard me declare God was a merciful God, ready to pardon repenting ſinners—— that he never heard any one ſay they ſigned the petition againſt their conſcience——that he ſaw R—— P—— the day before, who told him there were too many of his people againſt his coming, on which he (Deponent) replied, "I will go, by the bleſſing of God, let what will happen,"—that I reformed him, and a good deal of his family—that I attended my pariſh as well as any man could do; for, whether there was a call or not, I was often among my pariſhioners—that my doctrines were agreeable to the eſtabliſhed church, as far as he underſtood—that he was a brother to Hugh Stogdale, who, with John Seed and Samuel Seed, wanted to turn out the clerk, when I firſt came to the pariſh, without my permiſſion ——— that he would wiſh to have me ſtill for his Miniſter—that he never heard his brother make uſe of any threatning againſt me, becauſe he did not keep his company—that my church was always crowded.

Twelfth Witneſs

Swore, that he was not at home when the Church Wardens brought the petition for him to ſign——that he told one of them not to come to his houſe, for he would not ſign it, becauſe he did not deſire to do any thing againſt me—that he heard his name was put to the petition by his own ſon, who told him, he ſigned it for fear any harm would come to him, a report being ſpread that their land would be taken from all thoſe who did not ſign it—that he knew Moſes Seed, John Seed, John Quail, Francis M'Creedy, John Sprat, Torrens Stogdale, Hugh Stogdale, Samuel Seed, George Polly, Richard Kane, Moſes Seed, John Seed, Thomas Orr, Robert

Robert Johnſton, John Foſter, Bernard Coulter, William Kane, Richard Hughes, William Polly, John Polly, Thomas Polly, Hugh Seed, John Polly, Adam Seed, Thomas Nelſon, John Keown, Edward Nelſon, John Nelſon, Richard Nelſon, Edward Nelſon, John Preſs, John Read, William Agnew, Iſaac Walſh, Henry Waterſon, John Caſemay, Francis Alſop, John Coates, Richard Coates, and Thomas Coates—that all the above mentioned perſons were tenants at will to Lord —— [N. B. All theſe, and thoſe that follow, ſubſcribed the petition.] That James Pit had neither houſe nor land in the pariſh, and was a carpenter to Lord —— that Thomas Battlett was an appentice boy—that William Agnew and John Sprat were Preſbyterians—that John Seed was Lord ——'s ſmith, and Thomas Nelſon one of his bailiffs—that John Moore worked Lord ——'s mill, and Thomas Leathes made malt in his kiln—that John Preſs moſtly worked with Lord —— as a carpenter—that Iſaac Walſh was Lord ——'s ſteward and gardener—that Henry Waterſon, John Caſemay, and John Read were labourers to Lord —— that Francis Alſop was ſteward over his labourers—that John Coates, Richard Coates, and Nicholas Coates were Lord ——'s maſons, and Thomas Coates was under gardener to Lord ——. Deponent further ſwore that he generally attended my church—that he never knew me repreſent God as a ſevere Being, ready to plunge his creatures into everlaſting deſtruction upon the ſlighteſt tranſgreſſion—that he never knew me give a cut, but I always gave a cure for it, and that it was a good thing when a body had a ſore to get a plaiſter fot it—that, within theſe two years, I had been inſtrumental in reforming more people than ever was in his memory for fifty years, in the pariſh of Ballyculter,

and

and the neighbouring parishes—that my parish was reputed to be very wicked when I came into it—that the fame of it went all the way to Dublin—that I attended it better than he remembered any one to have done—that he never knew me take upon me to cast out devils—that he heard me read the Homilies of the Church of Ireland in the pulpit—that he believed my doctrines were agreeable to the established Church—that he could not tell but if Lord ——— attended the church, all the parishioners would be pleased with me—that he never heard six persons speaking hard against me in all his life—that he wished I was to continue Curate while he lived—that Hugh Stogdale, Samuel Seed, and John Seed, refused to sign the acts of vestry, because I would not turn out the clerk, who served for five or six years—that the man they wanted to put in was a very near relation to them all—that my church was so crowded that the seats could not hold all the people.

Thirteenth Witness.

Swore, that the Church Wardens did not bring a petition to him to sign—that he heard it read in the Round Church, and did not know how he might have been tempted to sign it, as well as other people—that he believed there were many lies in it—that he almost constantly attended my church, where I always declared that God was ready to pardon every repenting sinner—that he was in the church when the people were seized with fits, so called—that he saw none falling, but some praying, and praising the Lord—that the same never happened more than once—that all the seats, except Lord ——'s, were almost always full—that Richard Coats told Deponent he signed the petition against his conscience—that, when I came to the parish,

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it was reputed the wickedeſt in all Lecale—that great numbers in it now were intirely turned from ſin to holineſs, by my preaching—that his own family were in a better way than they were—that the pariſh was better attended then, than it ever was, ſince he was born—that he never knew me guilty of any neglect of duty—that, to the beſt of his knowledge, my doctrines were agreeable to the Church of Ireland—that he never heard me take upon me to caſt out devils—that he thought the moſt of the pariſh regarded, and liked me—that he wiſhed to have me continued as Miniſter.

Having cloſed the examination of witneſſes, I requeſted Mr. Marmion to ſhew the two petitions, of which he had furniſhed me with copies, that it might be ſeen whether the hand-writing in each correſponded — but he refuſed. The court was then adjourned to the 27th of November. I objected to it; but the Judge informed me it was uſual to adjourn all courts, whether they met, or not, and that there was no neceſſity for my attending it again, as no ſtep ſhould be taken with regard to my cauſe, without I got previous notice of it.

Being adviſed (in caſe of an appeal) to draw up a defence, proteſting againſt the tranſactions of the court, I wrote the following letter to Mr. Marmion.

'SIR,

'I hereby give you notice, that I diſſent from the 'late proceedings of the court, which has been held to try

'try me, for *ſuppoſed* miſdemeanors in the pariſh of 'Ballyculter; and that I mean to attend the next court-'day, in order to give in my defence, or pleading— 'I likewiſe inform you, that if the Biſhop does not pro-'nounce ſentence in my favour, I am determined to ap-'peal to the Metropolitan Court.

EDWARD SMYTH.'

'To Mr. Henry Marmion, Re-
'giſter of the Dioceſe of
'Down.'

Aſking the meſſenger whether it came from me, and being anſwered in the affirmative, he tore it acroſs, and threw it away, ſaying, "I will read nothing that comes from Mr. Smyth." After this extraordinary treatment, I ſent a copy of the letter to the Biſhop, hoping he would reprimand Mr Marmion for his diſcourteſy, and the impropriety of his conduct, as a public Regiſter. On the morning of the ſame day, I, alſo, ſent his Lordſhip a note, wherein I requeſted to know from him *in writing*, whether I would be permitted to make a public defence on the day his Lordſhip ſhould appoint for pronouncing ſentence: But, neither to this, nor any other letter, could I get a *written* anſwer. At night, Mr. Trail was ſent to acquaint me that his Lordſhip could not determine any thing with reſpect to my requeſt, 'till he had ſufficiently examined the notes of his Vicar General, and that he ſuppoſed I had already made a defence.

Fearing, from hence, that I would not be allowed the ſame privilege which was granted to St. Paul by

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an Heathen Judge, who had candour enough to ſay, *thou art permitted to ſpeak for thyſelf*, I was determined to preſent to his Lordſhip's *eyes*, what I could not addreſs to his *ears*; and therefore, drew up a long defence which I intended to ſend him, never expecting to meet any officer of the court to receive it. However, as it was neceſſary to go thro' the regular forms, I went to Hill-hall again, on the 27th of November. But how great was my ſurprize on meeting the Vicar General there, who accoſted me thus. "I am very glad, Mr. Smyth, that this troubleſome affair is at an end—I am heartily weary of it, I aſſure you—but the Biſhop has given me orders to diſmiſs the cauſe, on account of ſome irregular proceedings, on the other ſide," which he accordingly did, when the Regiſter came, and opened the court; but with this difference, that he did not mention the reaſon given in his private converſation, tho' I demanded it, at the time. I ſhewed him my defence which I deſigned to preſent there, for the inſpection of the Biſhop, but (ſaid I) he has now rendered it null—I aſked him, alſo, whether he was ordered to diſmiſs the cauſe with coſts. He ſaid, he did not believe it was cuſtomary in any eccleſiaſtical court, except in tythe-cauſes. Is it not manifeſt, from this converſation, that he himſelf underſtood I was then *acquitted*? But, it will more evidently appear from the following letter which I wrote directly to the Biſhop.

'My Lord,

'THOUGH I have reaſon to thank you for diſ-
'miſſing the cauſe, which has been for ſome time de-
'pending, yet (as my innocence has been inconteſtably
'proved)

'proved) I think a more public acquittal ſhould be 'given me. It is, certainly, becoming the high office you 'bear, ſteadily to ſupport your Clergy againſt all falſe 'Accuſers, that their *good may not be evil ſpoken of*: 'Therefore, I hope, and expect, that your Lordſhip 'will pronounce ſentence in my favour, either in the 'church of Down, or Liſburn, or elſe immediately put 'an advertiſement in the Belfaſt paper, aſſigning your 'reaſons for acquitting me, becauſe none were given in 'court, this day. Be pleaſed to let me know your in-'tention; for, if your Lordſhip will not comply with 'my reaſonable requeſt, it is then incumbent on me to 'vindicate myſelf in the moſt public manner.

'I am, my Lord,

'your Lordſhip's moſt obedient,

'and reſpectful humble ſervant,

'EDWARD SMYTH.'

His Lordſhip told the meſſenger he would ſend me an anſwer. In about eight hours after, I again requeſted it.—He then promiſed to ſend it immediately. The night paſſed over. At ten the next morning I went to ſee his Lordſhip; but (*oh tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in the ſtreets of Aſkelon!*) tho' he was in the houſe (as his own nephew afterwards informed me) he was denyed. Unhappy ſervant! Look into Rev. 21.8, and read thy woful ſentence there. In a ſhort time, Mr. Trail came to me, and (having the Bible in my hand, when he entered the room) after the common ſalutation of the day, I ſaid to him "Mr. Trail, I have been, this moment, reflecting on an incident relative to St. Paul, which is exactly ſimilar to my preſent ſituation, therefore, I beg leave to read it to you." *The magiſtrates*

giſtrates ſent the ſergeants, ſaying, let thoſe men go: And the keeper of the priſon told this ſaying to Paul, the magiſtrates have ſent to let you go — now, therefore, depart, and go in peace. But Paul ſaid unto them, they have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being Romans, and have caſt us into priſon, and, now, do they thruſt us out PRIVILY *? Nay verily— but let them come themſelves, and fetch us out.* He laughed, and ſaid, "Why, Mr. Smyth, I am come from the Biſhop, in conſequence of a note you ſent him yeſterday, and he deſired me to inform you that it was altogether inconſiſtent with the office of a Judge to advertiſe his ſentence, and that he acted (as he thinks) in the moſt legal and public manner, by *acquitting* you in the court where the trial was held." I could not help owning it juſt, but replied, "that the character of a Miniſter was ſo ſacred, and the cauſe of God ſo much depended on it, that it became every Dioceſan to maintain the dignity of his Clergy, when they were innocent, as it had appeared I was: And as there were none preſent at the court when the cauſe was diſmiſed, but thoſe who were concerned in it, I imagined it was his Lordſhip's duty more publicly to declare his deciſion." "The Biſhop, Sir (ſaid he) thinks otherwiſe, and can do nothing more than he has done." "Then (replied I) I muſt take the moſt effectual means to juſtify myſelf." Whether his Lordſhip's delay in giving his anſwer was deſigned, or not, let others determine: But it was then too late to put an advertiſement in the paper, which I had intended.

Though the world will not allow me to paſs ſentence on myſelf, yet I will ſo far take the liberty of a Judge

as to ſum up the evidence, and let my readers then compoſe a jury, and determine the cauſe as conſcience dictates; and I truſt, there will not be one diſſentient voice againſt me.

Now, candid reader, conſider by whom the original petition was ſigned, and for what reaſons. Firſt, by Lord ——, whoſe countenance I forfeited, by a faithful execution of my office. It originated from him, and was ſent, by his expreſs command, round the pariſh. I need not inform you what influence the word, or example, of a rich man has on the poor; eſpecially, when they, and their families, are beholden to him (under God) for their daily bread. Therefore, ſome put their names under his, with trembling hands, and aching hearts, fearing their helpleſs infants would be reduced to beggary. Out of fifty-ſix ſubſcribers, it has appeared that forty are tenants at will to him, and that ſixteen have employments under him; conſequently, may be well ſuppoſed (nay, the moſt of them were proved) to be under undue influence. James Pit is a carpenter maintained at his houſe, and Thomas Bartlett is an apprentice-boy, both without any property in the pariſh. Two, indeed, whom the world calls gentlemen, ſubſcribed their names, one of whom (if I remember right) was never in the church but once, on my firſt ſettling in the pariſh; therefore, I preſume, curioſity brought him even then. The other I cited, but he did not chuſe to appear, well knowing he could not make his allegations good; and, at the time of ſigning, he did not read the petition. We may therefore well take up the complaint of Iſaiah, and ſay, *judgment is turned away backward, and truth is fallen in the ſtreet.*

But

But, can even that petition be called original? Surely not, (except in a ludicrous ſenſe) as it has been incontrovertibly proved, that the majority of the ſubſcribers ſigned it out of fear, and againſt upbraiding conſciences. Even one of the Church Wardens, who was commiſſioned to carry it about, has acknowledged on oath, that he threatened many of them with the diſpleaſure of Lord —— on whom they were entirely dependant. Is not the proof of this ſingle circumſtance ſufficient to invalidate the petition? Moreover, the names of many others have been ſet down, without their permiſſion or knowledge; and (to ſwell the number) two *Preſbyterians*, and two *fictitious* names, have been added.

But, why was this petition ſet aſide? The Regiſter told me he "would not receive it into his office, becauſe it was not written on ſtamped paper;" but I rather believe, that wiſer heads than the author of it knew the charges therein contained would want proof, and were ſo frivolous, that they could not poſſibly affect me. In this emergency, what recourſe was taken? Another petition (horrid to tell!) was baſely forged, in which two freſh paragraphs (imagined to be of material import) were inſerted; as, alſo, five additional names. I now leave even *the Regiſter himſelf* to decide, which of the two petitions it would have been moſt honourable in him to receive. If the firſt was faulty, *ignorance* of the law was the occaſion of it—there was no harm deſigned by ſuch neglect—nor was it puniſhable; but the other was drawn up, not only in direct *wilful* oppoſition to the law of man, but, alſo, to the law of God, or even to the conſcience of an *honeſt Heathen*. Tho' ſuch procedure was moſt infamous in them who were

were privy to it, yet what epithet can we find bad enough to give the conduct of the V—— G——— who (in defiance of all ſtatutes, human and divine) ſat as J——e of a C——t, to try me on ſuch counterfeited charges? Nay, is not the B—— p himſelf equally culpable, who, after being informed of it (if he did not know it at firſt) obliged me to ſtand, for three days, like a criminal, to anſwer accuſations which were not only *falſe*, but were preferred againſt me, without the knowledge of the *ſuppoſed* ſubſcribers. It would, certainly, have been more commendable in him to excommunicate the perſon (however GREAT) who thus forged (or cauſed to be forged) the names of ſuch a number of people; that, by thus *delivering him unto Satan*, as it were, *for the deſtruction of the fleſh, his ſpirit might be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.*

Let us, now, conſider the witneſſes that were produced againſt me—Firſt, the Rev. Mr. Briſtow, who, (to the great ſurprize of my opponents) gave a moſt ingenuous, noble teſtimony in my favour. The next that appeared were three illiterate countrymen, whoſe whole living depended upon the will of Lord ——. On their croſs examination, they gave definitions of ſome words (quite plain to thoſe who were ever converſant with men, or books) as far from the true meaning as eaſt is from weſt, and they fairly acknowledged that they did not underſtand others, to which they had ſworn a few moments before. Thus did *their own tongues make them to fall, inſomuch that all who ſaw them laughed them to ſcorn*, and were convinced that they had *laid many and grievous complaints againſt me which they could not prove.*

To theſe three men I objected, before I knew that they were to appear in Court, and left their names with the Regiſter. It may be aſked, why did I object to them? Good reaſons I had.—Ever ſince I became their Miniſter, they were proud, turbulent, quarrelſome men —On my firſt appointment to the pariſh, they, with a few of their friends, not only perſonally abuſed me, but, alſo, twice refuſed to ſign the acts of veſtry, becauſe I would not permit them to turn out an excellent Clerk, who had ſerved for many years among them, and nominate another to whom they were nearly related, and who officiated in an adjoining pariſh. At another time, thinking to get me out of my Cure, they concerted a ſcheme with the REVEREND Mr. M'Crea, of Downpatrick, who drew up a petition to Lord —— baſely traducing my character, and ſtrongly recommending himſelf as my ſucceſſor. This was directed to Samuel Seed, who was to copy it out, and get ſome of his friends (if poſſible) to ſign it, with injunctions to conceal the part Mr. M'Crea took in it. But that PROVIDENCE, who *diſappointeth the devices of the crafty*, ſo ordered it, that the letter was brought to a man of the ſame name with him for whom it was deſigned. Being an honeſt, conſcientious man, and having a regard for me, he gave the letter into my poſſeſſion: And as Mr. M'Crea referred Lord —— to the Rev. Mr. Trotter for his character, I waited upon him, and told him the whole tranſaction; who, after ſending for Mr. M'Crea, ſharply rebuked him for his low-minded artifice.

John Seed, alſo, when Church Warden, bought flax with part of the poor-money, which lay in his hands; and being unexpectedly called upon for it, I lent

lent him a guinea, to ſave his character. Samuel Seed likewiſe, has told me numberleſs lies, from time to time; and once, with bitter imprecations, threatened to beat a man, who, out of love, reproved him for ſwearing. Hugh Stogdale (as appeared in the courſe of the trial) left the church, one Sabbath-day, in order to go to a funeral—got drunk in the houſe where the dead corpſe lay before him—and then returned to the church-porch, where he treated me with abuſive language, and (without the leaſt provocation) ſwore dreadfully that he would beat one James Bell, "if ever he or any of his clan came to that church again." Seeing him in ſo outrageous a paſſion, I quietly told him, that perhaps, inſtead of his keeping others out of the church, I would excommunicate himſelf.

From that hour he always denounced bitter things againſt me; and I have been often informed (even by his own family) that this was the ſole cauſe of his hatred to me. So that, it is evident, it was not from any diſlike to my doctrine (as he ſwore) that he abſented himſelf from the church; having frequented it before this occurrence, and having never appeared in it afterwards, when I preached.

Now, ſhould the oaths of men capable of acting in ſo baſe a manner be eſteemed valid? Let it be remembered, alſo, that the latter ſigned the Regiſter's notes, without reading them, or hearing them read. Of this the V—— G—— would take no notice, tho' often called upon; and afterwards, when many of *my* witneſſes offered to ſign their depoſitions, he would not permit them. I could wiſh, indeed, that this was the only part of his conduct, I had reaſon to condemn: But,

in

in juſtice to myſelf, I muſt bring another matter to the *light*, which was done in *darkneſs*.

A few days before the trial, he came down to C—e-w—d, and, when in company with Lord ——, the Church Wardens were ſent for, to whom he adminiſtered the oath, taken by thoſe in that office, in order to qualify them to ſwear the following preſentment againſt me.

'WE, the Church Wardens of the pariſh of Ballyculter, do preſent the Rev. Edward Smyth, Clerk, Curate of ſaid pariſh, for holding new and ſtrange opinions, contrary to the Catholic faith, and derogatory of the mercy of God.

'We preſent the ſaid Mr. Smyth, for aſſociating with people called Swadlers, and for preaching, and praying with them, in the fields and private houſes; at which preachings, many of ſaid Swadlers pretend to fall into fits; and ſaid Mr. Smyth takes upon him to caſt out the Devils, with which, he ſays, they are poſſeſſed.

'We, likewiſe, preſent him for not making uſe of the Liturgy of the Church of Ireland, on theſe field-preaching occaſions.

'JOHN STOGDALE,
'WILLIAM SEED.'

'We, the Church Wardens of the pariſh of Ballyculter, do ſwear, that we have not made the above preſentment againſt Mr. Smyth, thro' malice or ill-will

'will to him, but from a reſpect to our oath as Church 'Wardens, all which we have from our own know- 'ledge, and the common report of the neighbours.

'JOHN STOGDALE,
'WILLIAM SEED.'

'Sworn 14th October, 1776,
'Rev. Ralph Ward, Vicar-
'General.'

But, is there any truth in all this? Be pleaſed, reader, to look over the depoſitions made by theſe Church Wardens, in the court, and you will find them a flat contradiction to what is here aſſerted; therefore, they are guilty of the groſſeſt perjury. Having, lately, charged them with it, they both firmly denied their ſwearing to ſuch a preſentment: And one of them aſſured me he was entirely ignorant of it's contents, and that he imagined he had only taken the oath of a Church Warden, and that he did not ſign the *Petition* from any diſapprobation of my conduct.

The thought of his perjury (which, I truſt, God will not impute to him) lies ſo heavy on his mind, that he is, at preſent, much incenſed againſt Mr. W—d, who (he ſays) impoſed upon his underſtanding. He, likewiſe ſaid, that Lord ——— ſubſcribed his name, tho' it is not annexed to the copy, which was written in the public office, as dictated by the Regiſter, who would not let the original paper be ſeen.

Now, reader, reflect a little upon the part which his REVERENCE has taken in this affair,

Before he was admitted V——r G——l of the Dioceſe, it is to be preſumed he ſwore (agreeable to the 76th Canon) that he would, "to the uttermoſt of his underſtanding, deal uprightly, and juſtly, in his office, without reſpect of favour, or reward." But whether he has *thus* acted in the preſent inſtance, I leave every unbiaſſed mind to determine.

After remarking that the witneſſes againſt me gave a great part of their evidence contrary to their aſſertions in the petition, I ſhall now examine into the validity of that part of their teſtimony, which appears to be the ſtrongeſt.

It ſeems great ſtreſs was laid on my ſometimes changing the leſſons appointed for the day; but they who cavil at it, only betray their ignorance, as every Miniſter is allowed that liberty, in the book of Homilies. Nay, it is there ſaid, "It ſhall be well done to ſpend your time to conſider well of ſuch chapters before-hand, whereby your prudence, and diligence in your office may appear; ſo that your people may have cauſe to glorify God for you, and be the readier to embrace your labours, to your better commendation, to the diſcharge of your conſcience and their own." Now, leſſons taken out of the Apocrypha are often read by appointment; therefore I was left at liberty to ſelect chapters from theſe books, though not allowed canonical.

The Church Wardens depoſed, that I told them "I would not adminiſter the Sacrament to any that ſigned the petition." They miſtook my words which were theſe—"I know not how I can, with a ſafe conſcience,

ſcience, adminiſter the Sacrament to any that ſigned the petition, except they tell me they repent." I was particularly guarded in my expreſſions, foreſeeing what might happen. There were ſome aſſertions in the petition, which, in the nature of things, no man could avow from his own knowledge; therefore, (knowing that many of them would, unadviſedly, partake of the Lord's Supper) when it was adminiſtered in due courſe (to eaſe my own conſcience) I left my church to the care of another Clergyman; ſo that none have been really deprived of that means of Grace, conſequently, have no cauſe of complaint. But, *ſuppoſing* I had, literally, refuſed them *the Cup of bleſſing*, I think I would have been ſufficiently authorized from the rubrick before the Communion; for, they "had done wrong," to me, ſo that a great part of "the congregation was offended," and if they believed what they had ſet forth in the petition, many of them muſt have had "malice and hatred in their hearts" againſt me, therefore, would have been very improper communicants.

As to a few other immaterial charges, with regard to my doctrines, I would only obſerve, that ignorant people will often miſconſtrue paſſages which are very intelligible to thoſe of more refined ſenſe, or more poliſhed education: And that the addition, or ſubſtraction, of a word or two will entirely alter the meaning of a ſentence. Thus—"Tho' ye regularly come to church—receive the Sacrament, and read the Bible, when ye return home, yet ye *are* but nominal Chriſtians ſtill." (Vide p. 29.) Had I ſpoken thus, I ſhould have condemned myſelf by my own practice, and proved myſelf an uncharitable fool, taking upon me to judge the

hearts of men, when appearances were in their favour. But if inſtead of the word *are*, you ſubſtitute the words *may be*, the ſentence is juſt and proper.

Again—It has been ſworn that "I preached to *my* little flock, deſiring them to be no way concerned with other perſons, not even in eating, or drinking, or ſo much as touching cloathes." This is the conſtruction given to thoſe ſcriptural expreſſions, *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs, and what communion hath light with darkneſs? Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye ſeparate (ſaith the* LORD*) and touch not the unclean thing. To as many as walk according to this rule,* I have ſaid, *fear not* LITTLE FLOCK, *it is your* FATHER'S *good pleaſure to give you the kingdom:* And as Miniſters are required to *ſeparate the precious from the vile*, I have often exhorted thoſe who had *eſcaped the pollutions of the world*, to be *a particular people* unto God.

But, what credit can be given to the oath of the man to whoſe words I have now referred, when it has been proved (contrary to his depoſition) that he was in company with the Proctor, who was informed by him of all the articles he could ſwear to.

Want of underſtanding, no doubt, was the reaſon why ſome declared that "I repreſented God as an inexorable Being, ready to plunge his creatures into everlaſting deſtruction upon the ſlighteſt tranſgreſſion." When proving that *by the deeds of the law no fleſh living ſhould be juſtified*, they have heard me ſay, in the words of ſcripture,

ſcripture, CURSED *is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them; and he that offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.* Thus endeavouring to ſhew how *God concludeth all men under ſin, that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe,* they ignorantly, drew an inference, the very thought of which almoſt makes my blood run chill.

Unfortunately for John Seed, inſtead of confuting my opinion, with reſpect to original ſin, he confirmed it, having repeated almoſt the very words of one of our Homilies, which I ſhall here quote *verbatim.* Immediately after the fall of Adam, 'it came to paſs, that 'as before he was bleſſed, ſo now he was accurſed; 'as before he was loved, ſo now he was abhorred; 'as before he was moſt beautiful and precious, ſo now 'he was moſt vile and wretched in the ſight of the 'LORD his MAKER. Inſtead of the image of GOD, 'he was now become the image of the Devil—inſtead 'of the citizen of Heaven, he was become the bond 'ſlave of Hell, having in himſelf no one part of his 'purity and cleanneſs, but being altogether ſpotted and 'defiled, inſomuch that now he ſeemed to be nothing 'elſe but a lump of ſin, and, therefore, by the juſt 'judgment of GOD was condemned to *everlaſting* 'death; which was a more penal ſentence than *ſpiritual* or *temporal* death. (Vide p. 25.)

As to "Biſhops, Deans, Arch-deacons, Curates, &c." I always believed, and do now affirm, that, in every age, there have been SOME "*dumb dogs which could not bark:*" Nay I go farther, and ſay, lazy dogs, *ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber: Yea, greedy,*

dogs which could never have enough. Therefore, you may often find them *modeſtly* declaring, in the public papers, that "they hope their pariſhioners will not put them to the *diſagreeable neceſſity* of ſuing for their tythes."

Now, is it poſſible that the word of a Paſtor, who thus feeds upon the fat of his flock, and, by the mere force of law, tears the wool off their backs, can have the leaſt influence upon them? When he thus *lords it over God's heritage—grinds the faces of the poor* —and, by his *exaction* of tythes takes away a great part of the profit of that land, which they already hold too dear from oppreſſive landlords, what good effect can be expected from his miniſtry? Will thoſe committed to his care love or reſpect him? Is he following the example of his *meek and lowly* Lord, who *had not where to lay his head?* How unlike is he to the firſt Apoſtles, one of whom ſays to the Church, *did I or Titus make a gain of you? In all things I have kept myſelf from being burthenſome unto you, and ſo will I keep myſelf; for, I ſeek not* YOURS *but* YOU.

But, though I aſſert that *many* of the Lord's watchmen (if they can be accounted his) are dumb, lazy, greedy, dogs, far be it from me to paſs a *general* cenſure. Some I know who are an ornament to their holy profeſſion, and others there are, no doubt, with whom I am not acquainted.

Nothing now, I think, remains unanſwered; therefore, *whoſoever readeth, let him underſtand.* If it be conſidered, that *a Ward* has been the proſecutor, and *a Ward* (his relation) the Judge, it will direct the public to give me an *award* accordingly. As I am

now

now at their bar, let them remember that every cauſe is to be determined by the ſtrength and number of the evidences. If, therefore, they will impartially examine the proofs on each ſide (as I candidly believe they will) they muſt perceive, that thoſe produced in my favour are convincing, clear, and powerful, entirely confuting thoſe brought againſt me. The number of my witneſſes, likewiſe, far exceed: And it is worth obſerving, that not one of them was examined before hand (like thoſe on the other ſide) with regard to what they could teſtify in the court. Though it was allowable by law, yet I did not think it honeſt; and when it was declared on oath, it ſeemed to ſtrike even my adverſaries ſo much, that a number of the witneſſes were diſmiſſed, without being aſked one queſtion on a croſs examination.

Had I previouſly interrogated them, ſome circumſtances, which *ſeemed* to throw a ſhade on the brighter parts of my character, would never have been mentioned. But, it was wiſely ordered otherwiſe by PROVIDENCE; for, their confeſſion of ſuch things more plainly demonſtrated their uprightneſs, and ſtamped an additional weight on thoſe parts of their teſtimony which gave luſtre to my conduct among them, as a parochial Miniſter.

Let it, alſo, be remarked, that none of them (except John Crea) were ever joined with a ſociety of *Methodiſts*; and only three frequented my houſe, when we met in private to *provoke one another unto love, and to good works*—to *confeſs our faults*—and *to pray one for another that we might be healed.* It muſt, therefore, be manifeſt to every one that no *particular* attachment to me, but, merely, a love for the truth,

was the ſole reaſon of their giving ſuch a favourable evidence for me: And we cannot help admiring their integrity, when it be conſidered that, in defence of injured juſtice, they oppoſed their powerful landlord; though, thereby, they were (and are ſtill) likely to *ſuffer the loſs of all things.*

What ſay you now, reader? Guilty, or not guilty? Perhaps you may anſwer, in the words of an old adage, "where there is much ſmoke, there muſt be ſome fire." What! not ſatisfied yet? Well—I truſt to obviate all your ſcruples by bringing the petition once more upon the carpet. When read in public court, the matter was too corrupt to be ſwallowed down by thoſe whoſe ſenſes were more refined than the executioners. As, therefore, it has been univerſally condemned for murdering the character of their ſpiritual Father, and is like the hanged corpſe of a Parricide, that ſtinks in the noſtrils of the public, I ſhall claim the privilege of a ſurgeon, and diſſect it; limb from limb: And oh! when the belly is opened, what a horrid ſtench will iſſue forth from the putrified bowels! but tho' you, my delicate reader, may turn up your noſe, yet let your eyes be kept open, that you may ſee the different arteries, as I expoſe them to view. However, let me aſſure you, that I have no pleaſure in thus anatomizing it, and that my only deſign is, to prove to the world I am not that Theological Mountebank which I have been repreſented, pretending (like too many) to cure ſouls *for filthy lucre-ſake*, when, alas! they are only Undertakers.

The

The first assertion is, that the petitioners "have received great and just scandal and offence by my conduct and behaviour." But, *herein permit me to boast myself a little:* And *tho' that which I speak, be as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting, yet bear with me a little in my folly.* However culpable I may be before that God *who is of purer eyes than to behold the least iniquity*, yet I have walked before my flock, *as one that must give an account*; leading them by my example, as well as my precepts, *shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity*, both *in* my life and *doctrine.* Were God, indeed, *extreme to mark what I have done amiss*, I should not be *able to answer him one of a thousand*: But I may fairly challenge my greatest enemies, to prove a single instance of immorality against me, during the time I have laboured among them: Nay, they never attempted to lay it to my charge. Had I given them occasion to find fault in this respect, deservedly ought I to be trodden under foot of men; as there cannot be a more despicable character than a wicked Curate, except it be a wicked Bishop, who has *the care of all the churches*, and yet takes care of none. But, *for as much as I was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in me*, then they said, as the presidents, when wanting to accuse Daniel, *we shall not find any occasion against this man, except it be concerning the law of his God*; therefore, they have declared, that I "hold new and strange opinions, contrary to the Catholic faith, and derogatory from the goodness of a merciful God."

was the ſole reaſon of their giving ſuch a favourable evidence for me: And we cannot help admiring their integrity, when it be conſidered that, in defence of injured juſtice, they oppoſed their powerful landlord; though, thereby, they were (and are ſtill) likely to *ſuffer the loſs of all things.*

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'Tis true, that the doctrines I preach (namely, Regeneration, Juſtification by faith, Adoption, and Sanctification) are ſomewhat new and ſtrange; becauſe ſo ſeldom inſiſted on, in the pulpit, by thoſe who ſolemnly ſwore to maintain them. But, however novel they may appear, they are as old as the Reformation—as old as the Bible itſelf; and may alſo, be found in that excellent (tho' obſolete) book, called, *Sermons and homilies appointed to be read in churches*. But, too many of the modern Clergy are as regardleſs of human, as they are of divine, appointments. Boys, juſt paſt their teens, who, perhaps, never read with ſerioufneſs one chapter of the Bible, come forth from the Colleges, thoſe ſeminaries——of wickedneſs, as ignorant of the religion of JESUS, as ſo many Hottentots; and, *moved* by the proſpect of a *good living* (not by the HOLY GHOST, which they falſely affirm at the time of ordination) they take upon them to be *Teachers in Iſrael*. But, where, or what, have they been taught themſelves? *how can they preach, except they be ſent*—not of man, but GOD? Copying ſome moral eſſay out of an old news-paper, or magazine, or elſe tranſlating the Heathen authors they have been converſant with for ſo many years, they *teach for doctrines the commandments of men*—Could our venerable Reformers ariſe from their graves, and hear theſe beardleſs ſtriplings attempting to overthrow thoſe doctrines which they ſealed with their blood, if ſuch happy ſpirits could be capable of anger, how greatly muſt their indignation be rouzed! How muſt their bowels be moved within them! how much would they pity ſuch *blind leaders of the blind!*

Sorry

Sorry am I to ſay (yea, with grief of heart I ſpeak it) that I have heard many lectures from *celebrated* retailers of Divinity, in which the name of the adorable JESUS was never mentioned, tho' *no other name is given under Heaven, whereby we may be ſaved.* It is the *Law*, not the *Goſpel*—it is *Moſes*, not the LORD JESUS—it is the morality of *Epictetus*, not the doctrine of CHRIST, that is, generally, preached.

"*The hungry ſheep look up, and are not fed.*"

Their ears are tickled, indeed, with *philoſophy, and vain deceit, after the traditions of men—after the rudiments of this world*, but their ſouls are *periſhing for lack of* true *knowledge.* But, as the *people love to have it ſo*, whoever preaches *Chriſt, and him crucified*, will be accounted a *ſetter-forth of ſtrange Gods.* If he inſiſts on the neceſſity of regeneration, *a death unto ſin, and a new-birth unto righteouſneſs*, he *brings certain ſtrange things to the ears* of his audience. Should there be any *philoſopher*, who has curioſity enough *to hear what ſuch a babler as I have to ſay*, and is inquiring, *May I know what this new doctrine whereof thou ſpeakeſt is?* I will anſwer for myſelf with all plainneſs and freedom; and now declare to all Anti-chriſtian Arians, ſelf-righteous Phariſees, licentious Antinomians, and reprobating Calviniſts, that this is my creed.

I believe that (*a*) original ſin ſtandeth not in the following of Adam, but is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is ingendered of the

(*a*) 9th Article.

the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteouſneſs, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, ſo that the fleſh luſteth always contrary to the ſpirit; and, therefore, in every perſon born into this world, it deſerveth GOD's wrath and damnation.

Again, I believe, that *(a)* the condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is ſuch, that he cannot turn and prepare himſelf, by his own natural ſtrength, and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: Wherefore, we have no power to do good works, pleaſant and acceptable to GOD, without the grace of God, by Chriſt, preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

I farther believe, that *(b)* all works done before juſtification—before the grace of Chriſt, and the inſpiration of his Spirit, are not pleaſant to *God*, for as much as they ſpring not of faith in JESUS CHRIST; neither do they make men meet to receive grace: Yea, becauſe they are not done, as GOD hath willed, and commanded them to be done, I doubt not but they have the nature of ſins.

It is, alſo, my firm belief, that *(c)* we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our LORD and SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST, by faith, and not for our own works or deſervings: Wherefore, that we are juſtified by faith only, is a moſt wholeſome doctrine;

(a) Article 10th.——*(b)* Article 13.——*(c)* Article 11th.

trine; and I define the Chriſtian faith thus: *It is (b) the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen*; or in other words, *(c)* A ſure truſt and confidence a man hath in GOD, that, for CHRIST's ſake, his ſins ARE forgiven him, and he reconciled to the favour of GOD.

In ſhort, I believe, that *(d) we muſt be born again of the Spirit, or we cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven*—that *(e) without holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord*—that *(f) they who live in pleaſure are dead while they live*—and that *(g) the wicked, and all the people that forget God ſhall be turned into hell*: But, *(b) if the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon.*

If theſe opinions be "contrary to the Catholic faith, or derogatory from the goodneſs of a merciful God," I muſt ſtand branded as an heretic; for, *after the way which* the unregenerate world *call hereſy, ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers*: Though, at ſame time, I inſiſt that our Reformers come under the ſame predicament; and that, if the Catholic faith be "The eſtabliſhed Church," (as one of my Opponents *ſenſibly* defind.

(b) Heb. 11. 1.——*(c)* Homily on faith.——*(d)* John 3. 5.——*(e)* Heb. 12. 14.——*(f)* 1 Tim. 5. 6.——*(g)* Ps. 9. 17.——*(b)* Iſa. 55. 7.

defined it) I preach no doctrines contrary to it. Nay, in order to ſhew my hearers the true principles of their own church, I have frequently quoted paſſages from its liturgy—have inſiſted on the juſtneſs of many of its articles—and have frequently read it's homilies in the pulpit.

But it is no eaſy matter to pleaſe every one; therefore, I have been cenſured, not only for my doctrines, but, alſo, for "publicly aſſociating with people called Swadlers." My accuſers are as ignorant to what church that name belongs, as they are of the conſtitution of their own. A Moravian preacher, once, chuſing this text *She brought forth her firſt-born Son, and wrapped him in ſwadling-clothes*, ſome facetious wit immediately gave him the name of *Swadling John*, and, from that frivolous occurrence, the Moravians have been ſtigmatized with the name of Swadlers. With theſe, as a body, I have had no public connexion; though (deſpiſed as they are) I am not aſhamed to acknowledge many of them my Brethren in CHRIST: For, I am not ſo bigotted to any party, as to believe that GOD confines his pardoning grace to one particular ſect; but am perſuaded, that he will gather his church *out of all nations, people, and languages.*

But, I preſume, my enemies wanted to expoſe me, by repreſenting me as a companion of *Methodiſts*. It may be worth while to enquire who they are; for, *as concerning this ſect, we know that it is every where ſpoken againſt* This, alſo, has been a nick-name given, by this degenerate age, to the Rev. *Mr. Weſley*, his Brother, and ſome other Clergymen, who led a regular life, and laboured to reſtore the long-forgotten

gotten doctrines of the Church of England to their primitive luſtre. They, and moſt of their adherents, ſtill profeſs themſelves it's members; and if Mr. WESLEY be blameable for any thing, it is for his too ſtrong, and partial, attachment to our Church. In a letter I lately received from him are theſe words. 'It is the pecu-'liar glory of the Methodiſts that they will not be a 'ſeparate ſect—that no reproaches, or ill-uſage, can 'provoke them to ſeparate from their Mother-church. 'This is a new phœnomenon, and, I hope, portends 'good to the whole of our church and nation.' In another, he thus ſpeaks. 'The old Biſhop of London, 'cryed out, concerning my Brother and me, cannot 'they leave the Church? Then they could do no 'more harm (i. e. no more good.) We knew it well; 'and, therefore, in ſpite of a thouſand temptations to 'leave it, we continue therein to this day.' But, what is the true character of the *Methodiſts*, ſo called? They are a people that *fear God, and work righteouſneſs*. May ſuch be ever my aſſociates, my friends! *unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be thou* always *united*: For, I can truly ſay with David, *All my delight is upon the Saints that are in the earth, and upon ſuch as excell in virtue*. And, ſurely, to be connected with ſuch a *fraternity*, is much more laudable than to be enrolled as a member of a guzzling porter-club, or a trifling card-club, like a certain B——p, who, alſo, appoints his Clergy Gentlemen-uſhers to a dancing aſſembly.

But, I would beg leave to aſk, by what law, human, or divine, am I prohibited from aſſociating with whom I pleaſe? Tho' GOD hath ſaid that *a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed*, yet, if ſome of the Clergy be allowed

allowed a familiar intercourſe with gentlemen of the ſod, the turf, and the hazard-table, ſhall I be reſtrained from the converſe of the *poor*, who *have the goſpel preached unto them*, and whom GOD *hath choſen to be heirs of his kingdom?* The world may call me a lunatic, if they pleaſe; but I cannot help thinking—that a Curate who is praying with, and for, immortal ſpirits, and exhorting them to ſecure *a building of God, eternal in the Heavens*, is much better employed than his B——p, who ſquanders away his time (which he is required to *redeem*) in ſhuffling bits of painted paper, or in looking at his Clergy moving up and down a room, in all the ridiculous attitudes of a puppet, to the ſound of a viol.

Oh but, ſay my enemies, you "preach and pray with them in the fields, and in private houſes, as well within your own pariſh, as in other pariſhes."

This, truly, is a moſt weighty charge, and ought to be anſwered fully. But, where ſhall I find arguments? What ſophiſtry can I uſe to exculpate myſelf from ſuch a heinous crime—as preaching, and praying? If the word of God does not authorize me, I muſt plead guilty, and ſubmit to be condemned with a ſhameful ſentence. Should any high Church-man aſk me, *what is written in the law? How readeſt thou?* Why—I find it written that *Jeſus Chriſt went up into a* MOUNTAIN, *and when he was ſet, his Diſciples came unto him, and he taught them.* At another time, when *great multitudes were gathered together unto him, he went into a* SHIP, *and ſat, and the whole multitude ſtood on the ſhore, while he ſpake many things unto them:* And, aſſuredly, in whatever houſe

houſe he was, his *converſation* was always ſuch, *as might miniſter grace to the hearers.* Had he only preached in Synagogues, Mary would have loſt the opportunity of *chuſing that good part which* none could *take away from her.* The Apoſtles not only taught, and prayed, in the *temple*, but, alſo, on HILLS, in SCHOOLS, on the SEA-SHORE, and in MARKETS: And tho' frequently *ſcourged and commanded not to preach in the name of Jeſus*, yet, *daily in* EVERY HOUSE, *they ceaſed not to teach, and preach* JESUS CHRIST. But this is ſo diametrically oppoſite to the practice of their timorous, effeminate ſucceſſors, that they will all join in the hue and cry againſt one who would follow the *old* cuſtom; and, ſticking to human order, and preciſe form, leave him to copy the exploded example of his divine LEADER. O happy Prophets! the rules of whoſe church afford a ſanction to your natural lazineſs. As light makes manifeſt darkneſs, ſo the care and attention of a true *Shepherd* expoſes the indolence, and neglect, of all *hirelings*: Therefore, *their craft being in danger*, leſt they ſhould loſe the fat, and fleece of the flock, they riſe up in arms againſt him, ſaying, "in ſo doing, *thou reproacheſt us.*" But, whatever warrant ye may have from *man* thus to *dwell at eaſe in Zion*, your commiſſion from GOD runs thus: *Go and teach* ALL *nations—go out into the* STREETS, *and* LANES, *of the city——into the high-ways, and hedges; and compel the* ſpiritually *poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, to come in, that my houſe may be filled.* Let others, then, think and act, as they will, I conſider the whole world as my pariſh, and would not be a Miniſter only in the *church* on a Sunday, but execute my ſacred office at all times, and in all places. Perhaps,

haps, the ſubjoined copy of a certificate of the Rev. Mr. Davies may remove an objection which has been frequently made.

'I have been acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Edward 'Smyth, ſince he came to the pariſh of Ballyculter; 'and, from my own knowledge, as well as information, 'I can teſtify, that he always did his duty as a parochi-'al Miniſter, faithfully, conſcientiouſly, and diligently: 'And, if he happened, at any time, to be abſent from 'his pariſh, I was always ready and willing (as I often 'aſſured him) to do any occaſional duty for him; and, 'therefore, the pariſhioners could be at no loſs.—Given 'under my hand—Strangford, in the pariſh of Ballycul-'ter, 18th November, 1776.

MOSES DAVIES,"

Now, if I had a few days to ſpare from my peculiar charge, and dedicated them to the glory of GOD, and the good of ſouls, ſhould I not be allowed the ſame indulgence others enjoy, who abſent themſelves from their reſpective pariſhes, for whole weeks together, taking wild excurſions into the country, in ſearch of fleſh-pleaſing amuſements? Common humanity, and common juſtice, ſay, "Yes." Therefore, by the grace of GOD, I will preach in fields, and in private houſes, 'till that great preacher, Death, ſtops my mouth; and I would ſay to every individual in the miniſtry, *Go, and do thou likewiſe.* If we really do good by our public diſcourſes, every ſeventh day, are we not inexcuſable before GOD, and without love to our Brethren, if we do not exert ourſelves to promote that good, in the ſix intermediate days?

But,

But, here, a queſtion may ariſe—Do I really *preach and pray*, when out of the church? Certainly, my manner is diſſimilar to that of other Miniſters. If, therefore, it be ſaid, that they *preach and pray*, when they *read* over a ſet form of words, both in the deſk and pulpit, without the leaſt deviation, it muſt be denied that I *preach* or *pray*, when I make no uſe of thoſe regular forms: For, I differ as much from them, as he that is able to walk without crutches differs from lame men, who are ſupported by theſe props.

Perhaps, it may be objected, that I am an "author of ſchiſm," and, therefore, offend againſt one of the eccleſiaſtical canons. But, they that ſpeak thus *underſtand neither what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.*

Inſtead of "ſeparating" myſelf, or cauſing others to ſeparate, "from a communion of Saints, as approved by the Apoſtle's rule," I have united with them in a firm league, I truſt, never to be broken: And, it is well known, that I have been the means of bringing many Diſſenters, and Romans, not only to holineſs of life, but, alſo, to a frequent attendance upon the church-ſervice; and others, who profeſſed themſelves of the eſtabliſhed Religion, but had not joined with their brethren, for many years, in public acts of devotion, now regularly meet with them, every Sabbath-day. "The Chriſtians who are conformable to the doctrine of the Church of Ireland," I am far from "accounting prophane, and unmeet for me to join with in Chriſtian profeſſion." But, where ſhall I find ſuch? With the few that approach neareſt to this character, I do combine myſelf; tho' I confeſs they may well be called "a new brotherhood," becauſe moſt of thoſe who

ſay

ſay they are members of the Church of Ireland, neither believe, nor are conformable to, it's doctrines. To my own knowledge, many of it's Miniſters (who ſhould ſupport that church which ſo liberally ſupports them) baſely undermine it's fundamental points of doctrine; and, after praying along with the congregation, that GOD may *cleanſe the thoughts of their hearts, by the inſpiration of his* HOLY SPIRIT, will have the effrontery to ſay, that "to pretend to it, in our days, would be unpardonable arrogance, or hypocriſy." Theſe are the words of a Biſhop, who once laid his hand on my head, and ſaid, "*receive thou the Holy Ghoſt.*"

If it be conſidered alſo, that this canon was made in troubleſome times, when parties, under pretence of Religion, *ſecretly* aſſembled to concert meaſures for overturning the Reformation from Popery, it cannot extend unto me; as my preaching is *public*, and tends to ſubvert the doctrine of all human merit, which is a principal error of the Church of Rome: And many of thoſe, who, once, perhaps, were ill affected to the preſent conſtitution, are now brought to love, honour, and obey the King, being *ſubject to the higher powers, for conſcience-ſake.* If it had been really deſigned to prohibit all private godly exhortation, it would bring a great reproach on our church, by forbiding us to do good, and enjoining what is contrary to the word of GOD. But to remove this aſperſion, and to give a latitude to thoſe who have tender conſciences, the 21ſt article declares that *general councils may err, and have erred, in things pertaining unto God; wherefore, things ordained by them have neither ſtrength, nor authority, unleſs it be declared that they be taken out of holy Scripture*

ſcripture. As therefore, no paſſage of ſcripture can be produced to give the leaſt ſanction to ſuch conſtruction of the *Canon* in queſtion, it makes but little *report* in my ears.—I would now beg leave to addreſs the Clergy in general, but in particular my LORDS the BISHOPS; and while I am propoſing the following queſtions, I hope they will anſwer them to GOD, and their own conſcience.

Does every Miniſter, (as required) publicly read all the Canons, &c. once every year? Do all that exerciſe eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction procure (as much as in them lieth) all the Canons to be in all points duly obſerved, not ſparing to execute the penalties upon any that ſhall wilfully break, or neglect to obſerve the ſame?

Do all preachers, every year, at the leaſt, maintain, in their public diſcourſes, the King's ſupremacy in cauſes eccleſiaſtical? Canon 2d.

Do all manner of perſons, nay, do the Clergy themſelves, keep the Lord's day, and other holy-days, according to God's holy will and pleaſure; that is, in hearing the word of God read and taught, in private and public prayer, in viſiting the poor and ſick, and uſing all godly and ſober converſation? Canon 6th.

Do all graduates wear, in the cathedral church, ſuch hoods as are agreeable to their degrees? Canon 7th.

Do beneficed men never teach any vain opinions, or Popiſh errors, diſagreeing from the articles of the Church of Ireland? Do they all preach juſtification by faith alone? Or, is it the merit of good works (that

(that Papiſtical doctrine) that is laid as the foundation of our acceptance with GOD? Canon 9th.

Does every Miniſter, on every Sunday, examine and inſtruct the youth, and ignorant perſons of his pariſh? Canon 11th.

Are the heads of the Catechiſm divided into ſo many parts as there are Sundays in the year, and explained to the people, in every pariſh-church? Canon 12th.

Does every beneficed Miniſter (tho' he has a Curate under him) read himſelf the divine ſervice, and adminiſter the Sacraments of baptiſm, and of the Lord's ſupper, twice every year, at the leaſt? Canon 13th.

Is any God-father, or God-mother, ſuffered to make any other anſwer than by the book of common prayer is preſcribed in that behalf? Do the moſt of them make any anſwer at all? Or, have they all received the communion?- Is it not notorious that children often ſtand ſponſors for children? Canon 16th.

Do you, my LORDS, every third year, at the leaſt, perform the duty of confirmation? Canon 17th.

Does every Miniſter, in the afternoon before the adminiſtration of the Sacrament, give warning, by the tolling of a bell, or otherwiſe, to the intent that if any have ſcruple of conſcience, or deſire the ſpecial miniſtry of reconciliation, he may afford it to thoſe that need it? Canon 19th.

Does

Does any Miniſter admit to the receiving of the holy communion any of his flock which be openly known to live in ſin notorious? Canon 20th.

Do you, my Lords, provide that the Clergy and people be not burdened with unjuſt exactions, by your ſervants and officers, in your viſitations? Canon 23d.

Has every Dean been reſident, in his Cathedral-church, four-ſcore and ten days, every year? And has he continued there in preaching of the word of God, and uſing good hoſpitality? Has he, alſo, urged other Miniſters to the ſtudy of the holy ſcriptures, and every one of them to have the New Teſtament, not only in Engliſh, but, alſo, in Latin? Canon 26th.

Have your *Lordſhips* always appointed prayers and faſts to be uſed, at the ſolemn ordering of Miniſters? And have ye ordained any but only upon the Sundays immediately following the Ember-weeks? And has this been done, in the preſence, not only of the Archdeacons, but, alſo, of the Deans, and two Prebendaries, at the leaſt? Canon 29th.

Have your *Lordſhips* ever admitted any perſon into ſacred orders, who was not a graduate of ſome univerſity, or who had not letters dimiſſory from the Biſhop of whoſe dioceſe he was? Was every Deacon twenty-three years old, and every Preſbyter twenty-four years complete? Canon 31ſt.

Have your *Lordſhips* diligently examined them in the preſence of three Miniſters, at the leaſt, who were to aſſiſt you, at the impoſition of hands? Canon 32d.

Have

Have your *Lordſhips* earneſtly, and diligently, exhorted all patrons of benefices, to have before their eyes the laſt day of judgment, and the tribunal ſeat of GOD? Therefore, that they prefer no man to any eccleſiaſtical living, but him, who, by doctrine, judgment, godlineſs, honeſty, and innocency of life, is able to bear ſo heavy a burden? Canon 34th.

Have your *Lordſhips* ever admitted any Miniſter to ſerve a Cure, without teſtimony of the Biſhop of the dioceſe whence he came, in writing, of his honeſty, ability, and conformity to the eccleſiaſtical laws of the Church of Ireland? Canon 38th.

Does every Miniſter labour diligently with Popiſh recuſants in his pariſh, thereby to reclaim them from their errors? And do you, my LORDS, (as your *important* affairs will permit you) uſe your beſt endeavour, by inſtruction, perſuaſion, and all good means you can deviſe, to reclaim both them, and all others, within your dioceſes, ſo affected? Canon 40th.

Do all Miniſters, when any perſon is dangerouſly ſick, inſtruct, and comfort them, in their diſtreſs? And when any is paſſing out of this life, is there a bell tolled? Canon 41ſt.

Do any eccleſiaſtical perſons reſort to *taverns* or *ale-houſes*, or board, or lodge, in any ſuch places? Do they ever ſpend their time *idly*, by day or by night, giving themſelves to playing at *dice*, *cards*, or *tables*, or any other *game unbeſeeming their function*? Do they uſually wear gowns with ſtanding collars, and ſquare caps? And, in their journeys, cloaks with ſleeves, commonly called Prieſt-cloaks? When in public,

public, do they go in their doublet and hose, without coats, or cassocks? Do they ever wear light-coloured stockings? Canon 42d.

In every parish-church, is there a parchment-book provided, wherein is written the day and year of every christening, wedding, and burial? And do the church-wardens, once every year, transmit unto your Lordships a true copy of the names of all persons christened, married, or buried? Canon 47th.

Is a table of kindred and affinity publicly set up in every church? Canon 47th.

Is every marriage celebrated publicly in the parish-church, where either the man or woman liveth, and that between the hours of eight and twelve in the forenoon? Canon 49th.

Before any license given for the celebration of matrimony, do two sufficient witnesses declare on oath, that the express consent of the parents, or guardians, of the parties, is thereunto had, and obtained? Canon 50th.

Does any Minister celebrate matrimony between any persons, without a license, or without publishing banns, three several Sundays, by the space of three months before? Canon 52d.

As, in every parish, there are whore-mongers, drunkards, swearers, and filthy talkers, do the church-wardens faithfully present to your Lordships all such offenders? Canon 61st.

Do the Miniſters and Church-wardens of every pariſh, yearly, within forty days after Eaſter, exhibit to your Lordſhips all the names of all the pariſhioners, who, being at the age of ſixteen years, received not the communion at Eaſter before? Canon 63d.

When your viſitations are held, do you, my *Lords*, deliver, or cauſe to be delivered, to the Church-wardens, ſuch books of articles, as contain the form of oath, which muſt be taken immediately before every bill of preſentment? Canon 68th.

Is every *Vicar-general* learned in the civil, and eccleſiaſtical, law? Is he a batchelor of law, and reaſonably well practiſed in the courſe thereof? As, likewiſe, well affected, and zealouſly bent, to religion, touching whoſe life and manners no evil example is had? Canon 76th.

Does any Regiſter, or any officer exerciſing eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, take or receive any other, or greater, fees, than ſuch as are allowed by lawful authority in this kingdom? Canon 82d.

Have your Lordſhips delivered to your Regiſters two tables containing the ſeveral rates, and ſums, of all the ſaid fees, to be placed by them, one in the uſual place where the court is kept, and the other in their Regiſtry? Canon 83d.

Do the Church-wardens of every pariſh diligently ſee that all the pariſhioners duly reſort to their church, upon all Sundays, and holy days? And, when they find them ſlack and negligent in reſorting to the Church,

do

do they preſent them to your Lordſhips? Canon 88th.

Do they preſent all that talk, or laugh, in Church? Canon 91ſt.

Do the Miniſters and Church-wardens mark whether all and every of the pariſhioners come ſo often, every year, to the holy communion, as the law and our conſtitution do require? Canon 95th.

Is there a ſtrong cheſt provided in every pariſh, having three keys? And is it faſtened in the moſt convenient place that the pariſhioners may put into it their alms? Canon 96th.

Do all ſchool-maſters teach, in the Latin tongue, the grammar ſet forth by King Henry the eighth, and none other? Canon 99th.

Now, my LORDS SPIRITUAL, if any of the Canons are binding, all are equally ſo: And, ſhould I be condemned for a breach of any of them, every Biſhop, Miniſter, &c in the kingdom muſt be brought in guilty; as I am bold to ſay, they infringe, not only one, but many of them. Therefore, *let him that is without ſin among you throw the firſt ſtone* at me.

It is, alſo, objected to me that I do not "make uſe of the liturgy of the Church of Ireland." When *within* the church-walls I always do—But, where am I commanded to uſe it in my private, or public, devotions, when *out* of them? Where am I forbidden to offer up the breathings of my ſoul in any other words than that

form preſcribes? Who can tell my wants to God, as well as myſelf? Were the compilers of our liturgy the only people that could *pray with the ſpirit, and underſtanding?* Is there no virtue in any other prayers than thoſe which they compoſed? When *he that has the key of David* opens our mouth, *gives us new tongues*, and *writes his laws in our hearts*, we are no longer bound by the ſhackles of men; for, *when the* SON *makes us free, we are free indeed.* And I muſt ſay, that it would have appeared ridiculous in ST. PAUL, had he pulled out a paper, and read his prayers, when he kneeled down with the multitude on the ſhore.

It is, likewiſe, affirmed, that "many of my attendants on theſe field-preaching occaſions, pretend to fall into fits, when I take upon me to exorciſe, and to caſt out the Devils, with which (I ſay) they are poſſeſſed."

That they have fallen into fits I deny—but that many have been obliged to cry out, with the trembling Jailer, *what muſt I do to be ſaved?* I confeſs. And, have I not great reaſon to adore and magnify *the* FATHER *of ſpirits*, who has made uſe of ſuch a weak inſtrument as me to *turn Sinners from the error of their ways?* Indeed, *tho' the people have ten thouſand* INSTRUCTORS *in CHRIST, yet have they not many* FATHERS. It is a matter, therefore, of humble rejoicing unto me, that I have *begotten* ſome *thro' the goſpel*—ſome who are *the Epiſtle of* CHRIST *miniſtered by me, to be known, and read, of all men—an Epiſtle, written, not with ink, but with the* SPIRIT *of the living* GOD. And, I truſt, that, *finiſhing*

my

my courſe with joy, I ſhall be enabled to ſay, at the laſt great audit, "Lo, here I am, O LORD, and *the children whom thou haſt given me.*"

But, why is it thought wonderful that any, like David of old, ſhould *roar out, for the diſquietneſs of their hearts?* The reaſon is plain—becauſe it is a new thing in the land; though, if we ſearch records, not very ancient, we ſhall find frequent inſtances of it. It is ſaid of MARTIN LUTHER, and of Mr. BOLTON, when under convictions for ſin, that *the very venom thereof drank up their ſpirits*, and that *their bodies ſeemed dead, ſo that neither ſpeech, ſenſe, nor blood, appeared in them for more than a day.* But, why are *thoſe that provoke God* ſo *ſecure*, now-a-days, and are not brought to ſee, and lament, the *exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin?* Becauſe moſt of our modern *Divines* ſhew no manner of life, or ſpirit, in their preaching, and CHRIST crucified is not the ſubject of their diſcourſes. Dead men cannot beget living children; while, therefore, they are *ſleeping the ſleep of death* themſelves, they can never awaken their drowſy, lethargic hearers. Reading over their dull ſyſtem of Ethicks, as dryly as the grave citizen reads the news, over his diſh of coffee, the auditory (if it can be ſaid that they hear at all) remain as unmoved (to uſe a vulgar phraſe) as the wooden man in Eſſex-ſtreet. But let them *preach*, not *themſelves*, *but* CHRIST JESUS, the LORD, with an energy becoming thoſe who are *ſetting life and death, bleſſing and curſing*, before his people, and GOD will acknowledge his word, by ſending it with ſuch power, that many will be *pricked to the heart*, like the *three thouſand* under PETER's ſermon, who ſaid unto the Apoſtles, *men, and brethren, what*

ſhall we do? When a ſoul is convinced that he is *crucifying the* LORD *afreſh*, by his ſins, and that *Hell is moved from beneath to meet him at his coming*, he will be forced to *ſmite upon his breaſt*, and cry out in good earneſt, "GOD *be merciful to me a ſinner.*" How emphatically is the ſtate of the broken-hearted deſcribed by thoſe good old Biſhops that penned our homilies. If our REVEREND Divines ever read that antiquated legend, I refer them to the ſermon on faſting, for theſe remarkable words.

'When good men (thoſe who before thought themſelves good) feel in themſelves the heavy burden of 'ſin—ſee damnation to be the reward of it—and behold, with the eye of their mind, the horror of Hell, 'they tremble—they quake—and are inwardly touched with ſorrowfulneſs of heart for their offences, and 'cannot but accuſe themſelves, and open this their 'grief unto Almighty God, and call upon him for 'mercy. This being done ſeriouſly, their mind is ſo 'occupied, partly with ſorrow and heavineſs, partly 'with an earneſt deſire to be delivered from this danger 'of hell and damnation, that all deſire of meat and 'drink is laid apart, and loathſomeneſs of all worldly 'things and pleaſure cometh in place; ſo that 'nothing, then, liketh them more, than to weep, 'to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behaviour of body, to ſhew themſelves weary of this life." If a Methodiſt had written this, would not the world ſay, he ſhould be put in Swift's hoſpital?

All bleſſing, and praiſe be to the *Friend of ſinners*, who, while I have been *ſounding an alarm in* GOD'S *holy*

holy mountain, has broken the hearts of many ſinners, which, before, were as *firm as a ſtone, yea, as hard as a piece of the nether mill-ſtone.* Confeſſing the word to be *quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit*, they were *bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his Mother*, and never ceaſed crying to the good SAMARITAN, till he *bound up their wounded* conſcience, and *poured in the oil of joy and gladneſs*, making *the bones which he had broken to rejoice.*

He that committeth ſin (ſays ST. JOHN) *is of the Devil*, who is *the God of this world*; therefore, I really do look on every impenitent Sinner, as a kind of dæmoniac—as one poſſeſſed by the Devil, who is repreſented as *a ſtrong man armed, keeping his palace*: But, *when a ſtronger than he*, even *the* LORD JESUS, *cometh upon him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he truſted, and divideth his ſpoil. He was called* JESUS, *becauſe he came to ſave his people* FROM *their ſins*; and *for this purpoſe was he manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil, and redeem us from all iniquity.* When, therefore, he is held forth, by his ſervants, as *a* SAVIOUR *exalted on high, to give repentance, and remiſſion of ſins*, ſinners gladly *lay hold of the hope that is ſet before* them. But ſtill, *he that planteth is nothing, neither he that watereth, but* GOD *that giveth the increaſe.*

As PETER, then, ſaid to the *High Prieſt and rulers of the people*, before whom he was brought to anſwer *by what power, or by what name*, he had healed a

lame man, ſo ſay I unto the High Prieſt, by whom I have been lately *called to give an account of my ſtewardſhip*, "*If I be examined of the good deed done to the* ſpiritually *impotent, be it known unto you, that, by the name of* JESUS CHRIST *of Nazareth, theſe men are made whole.*" I was only *the Miniſter by whom they believed* on the ſaving name of JESUS.

He alone is reckoned a good actor, who can move the paſſions of his audience: While, therefore, I have been repeating the moſt diſmal tragedy that ever ſounded in the ears of man, and have *evidently ſet forth* JESUS CHRIST *before the eyes* of Sinners, as *crucified* BY them, and FOR them, is it at all ſurprizing that ſtrong emotions ſhould be excited, and that they ſhould *look on* HIM *whom they had pierced, and mourn* for thoſe ſins which brought the LAMB of GOD to death?

When ſome fictitious ſcene of woe is well repreſented on the ſtage, the ſpectators are bathed in tears; but, when the true hiſtory of the LORD JESUS (that *man of ſorrows!*) is read in the deſk, or roſtrum, by an unanimated, lifeleſs preacher, the hearers alſo remain unaffected, or, perhaps, are lulled into a deeper ſlumber. May the SPIRIT cry unto all ſuch, with that voice which raiſed Lazarus from the dead, *Ariſe, ye ſleepers, and call upon your* GOD, *if ſo be he will think upon you, that ye periſh not!*

The petitioners have, moreover, aſſerted, that I lately took a journey to the city of Derry, where I met a weak young Cleryman, of the name of ABRAHAM, whom I perſuaded to attend me, by telling him that I had

had a vision, by which I was commanded to go and convert the world, and that he (ABRAHAM) was to be my fellow Apostle."

By whom were they informed of this? By the Father of lies — who, when he finds his kingdom tottering, raises a thousand groundless rumours, to disparage, and stop (if possible) the work of GOD. It was, indeed, a vision of their own brains; but these *Diviners have told false dreams.* Was it not sufficient for them to vilify me, but must they, also, publish a libel against another, who not only fed their *souls* with *the* BREAD *of life*, but contributed liberally to the relief of the *bodies* of their poor? But, perhaps, this may be the reason why they esteem him weak; as many *sensible* Prophets, instead of thinking it *more blessed to give than to receive, look, every one, for their gain, from their quarter. We therefore, are* FOOLS *for* CHRIST'S *sake, but they are* WISE *in* CHRIST. However, that young man whom they despise, is a true *child* of faithful ABRAHAM, and has more real sense and religion (in my opinion) than the whole collective body of those who were weak enough to believe, and propagate, an *old wife's fable.* But, in order to vindicate his character, which an *honourable* man has so *dishonourably* attempted to wound, it may be proper to lay before the public a letter which I wrote to him, and was the occasion of our connexion.

Castleward, March 5th 1776.

'REV. SIR,

'FROM the character you bear, I am inclined to 'think you will not look upon this address as presump-'tuous, tho' it comes from one entirely unknown to

x Remember that the term Methodist was then only applied to Churchmen

'you. Engaged in the ſame *miniſtry of reconciliati-*
'*on* with you, and, alſo, ſtigmatized (or rather ho-
'noured) with the ſame name of Methodiſt, I truſt we
'will *ſtrive* together *for the hope of the goſpel* com-
'mitted to our charge, that we may deliver up our re-
'ſpective flocks with joy, at the laſt great day. As it
'is become ſo ſingular for any Clergyman to eſpouſe
'the doctrines of the reformation, or (more properly
'ſpeaking) primitive Chriſtianity, the truth of which
'a noble army of Martyrs have ſealed with their blood,
'it rejoices me that you have been raiſed up, in this
'degenerate age, as a witneſs for the crucified JESUS:
'And, I hope it will give you equal pleaſure to hear,
'that you do not ſtand ſingle in ſo glorious a cauſe.
'I have been Curate of Ballyculter above two years,
'and (all glory be to that GOD whoſe *ſtrength* was
'*made perfect in* my *weakneſs!*) have been inſtru-
'mental in *turning* many *ſinners from the error of*
'*their ways*, to *worſhip the* LORD *in all the beauty*
'*of holineſs*. And as I have reaſon to think that
'GOD has, alſo, bleſſed your miniſterial endeavours,
'I eſteemed it my duty thus to encourage you in *well*
'*doing*, and, as a friendly Monitor, to adviſe you to
'*ſtir up the gift of* GOD *that is in you*. Oh, my
'dear Sir, if you really believe the Methodiſts to be
'*the Children of* GOD, give them all poſſible encou-
'ragement——countenance them in every company;
'as I know, from experience, that the authority of a
'Miniſter of the Church of England ſways more, with
'the generality of the world, than the revealed will of
'GOD, and induces them to embrace that *ſound doctrine*
'which they are unwilling to hear from the lips of
'thoſe, who have not been regularly bred, and ordain-
'ed. Oh, *be not faint in your mind*. With renew-

ed

'ed vigour, *press towards the prize of your high call-*
'*ing in* CHRIST JESUS. Let us *beware, lest a*
'*promise being left us of entering into his rest, we,*
'*at last, come short of it.* Bear the cross for a few
'years longer, and, *if you faint not*, you shall wear *the*
'*crown that fadeth not away.* May you be *filled*
'*with all the fullness of God!* May your *bow abide*
'*in strength, and abundant utterance be given you,*
'that you may *boldly declare the truth as it is in*
'*JESUS!* Believe me, Rev. Sir,

'your humble servant, and Brother
'in the kingdom and patience of JESUS,

'EDWARD SMYTH.'

Shortly after, I received the following answer.

La Derry, March 9th 1776.

'DEAR SIR,

'I received with very great joy your favour, and take
'the earliest opportunity to give you my grateful ac-
'knowledgments for it. I have sat long, *like a spar-*
'*row alone on the house-top*, without one of my bre-
'thren to countenance me in my avowed testimony,
'both public and private, to the usefulness of Mr.
'WESLEY's truly Christian plan of reviving primi-
'tive Religion, both doctrinal and practical. Here, in
'general, they did acknowledge it, but did nothing to
'further it. I cannot say I did much myself, until
'rouzed by GOD's providences in my family, and in
'myself. I saw I was as far gone in hypocrisy as
'others—as lifeless, and unprofitable in my station—
'and (to add to my misery) *the light of* GOD's *counte-*
'*nance* (never before prized, valued, or almost thought

'of)

'of) being withdrawn, left me naked and expoſed, 'like *a beacon on the top of a rock*, with all the mer-'cileſs ſtorms of an evil and afflicted conſcience beating 'upon me inceſſantly. It was a dreary ſix weeks 'night, much to be remembered, I hope never to be 'forgotten, while memory remains. I think no Egypti-'an bondage, or ſufferings, could equal it. I *groped* 'about, *like the blind for the wall*, and ſought ſome 'friendly hand to help and guide me thro' the utter 'darkneſs; but, *miſerable comforters were they all!* 'even my old ſpiritual companions: Though, had it 'not been for them, I muſt (I think) have periſhed in 'deſpondency and deſpair. When the SUN *of righte-'ouſneſs* again looked out, and ſmiled, I could not 'forget my companions, and only comforters in the 'night of my diſtreſs. On all occaſions, formerly, I 'had juſtified them, but ſtill, as one diſtinct from them. 'I now became one of themſelves, at the hazard of 'every thing worth valuing in this world—my friends, 'and the moſt comfortable, and commodious ſituation—'for doing good in my generation. The ſtorm of per-'ſecution did not come unexpected. I was ſtrong, 'for a while, thro' divine grace: But, the greateſt 'trial now drew on. It appeared to me, from repeated, 'awful, warnings, in the night, that I ſhould relax, and 'not forſake the poſt aſſigned me by PROVIDENCE; 'and, ſoon after, an abundant experience (more than ever 'I enjoyed) of GOD's goodneſs, and pardoning love, 'under the preaching of a moſt profligate Miniſter, 'perſuaded me to ſtay, if poſſible, under the protection 'of the Church of England. Yet I am uneaſy——I 'am not ſufficiently clear in the divine prohibition; 'and much unfaithfulneſs, ſince that, in many things, 'quite darkens me. In ſuch a ſtate, judge how ac-

'ceptable

'ceptable your letter! like the ſun, indeed, riſing on 'the benighted traveller. GOD grant your next favour 'may reſemble him in his ſtrength. I requeſt it moſt 'earneſtly, and am open to the freeſt exhortation. But, as 'I have an hundred things to ſay, that cannot eaſily be 'communicated by letter, and as I am every way diſ-'treſſed, and in preſſing need of an able friend and 'counſeller, to ſave me from any raſh determination, I 'would beg the favour, rather, of an immediate viſit 'from you. I do not know your ſituation at Caſtle-'ward; and I am ſo tyed, by conſtant morning-ſervice, 'to this place, that I cannot readily leave it, as I am not 'at preſent, quite in health. I have a comfortable bed 'for you, and ſtable-room in abundance for your 'horſe. We have no pride, or ceremony, among us— 'we are almoſt a family of love. You need not fear, 'then, an hoſpitable reception; and if your abſence, for 'one Sabbath, can be diſpenſed with, (which I think 'may on an extraordinary occaſion) you may do much 'good—you may *plough up* much *fallow ground*, I 'aſſure you, however humbling the declaration. The 'only inducement I have to offer you, next to doing 'an act of truly Chriſtian friendſhip, is the ſociety of 'ten, or twenty people, who ſhine ſo brightly in their 'profeſſion, as to force veneration even from Infidels, 'to the glory of their heavenly FATHER. I hope this 'will prevail. May *the angels of* GOD conduct your 'on the way! may thoſe *miniſtring ſervants unto* '*the heirs of ſalvation* be your guide even unto 'death, is the hearty prayer of

'your affectionate Brother in CHRIST,

JOHN ABRAHAM.

Perceiving

Perceiving that he had *drunk into one ſpirit* with me, and that he *loved the* LORD JESUS *in ſincerity*, I found myſelf ſtrongly united to him; and, therefore, went to pay him a ſhort viſit. He returned the compliment; and, after ſpending a few days with me, *in the labour of love*, he departed——each being comforted, and ſtrengthened, by the interview.——Bluſh, bluſh, ye black calumniators, and pray for that *Charity* which *thinketh no evil.*

Not ſatisfied with this groſs ſlander, they have, alſo, charged me with "neglecting to do my duty, as a Clergyman, and Curate ought." It muſt be acknowledged that I have not done it, as many Clergymen, and Curates do—*grudgingly, and of neceſſity.* They think it part of their office to oppreſs the poor for their tythes—to drink, and hunt—to frequent horſe-courſes, cock-pits, aſſemblies, and gaming-tables; *charitably fearing*, if they abſtained from theſe faſhionable diverſions, their pariſhioners might follow their *bad* example—be no longer *conformed to this world*—grow mad and melancholy—and, at laſt, turn downright—Methodiſts. If, therefore, this was a duty incumbent on me, I frankly own, I have neglected it. But, ſeriouſly ſpeaking, what have my adverſaries proved againſt me? One has ſworn, that on St. Stephen's day, I went to a religious meeting at Liſburn, without reading prayers in my pariſh-church. [N. B. Had I been at the tail of the hounds, with ſome of my *Reverend* Brethren, no fault would have been found.] Another depoſed that a couple were married by the Clergyman of a neighbouring pariſh, as I happened to be from home. And, is this all? All, indeed—Mighty neglect, in the ſpace of three years! would to GOD that every pariſh had

had as little to complain of! But they have, certainly, miſtaken the nature of this allegation, as it ſhould have run thus. "Mr. S——h is *righteous over much*, and has done more than he was bound to do; as he not only preached every LORD's day, but (unpardonable crime!) exhorted, and prayed with us, and others, at our own houſes, on the week days——viſited the ſick, without being ſent for—gave them money and medicines——inſtituted a monthly ſacrament——expounded portions of ſcripture, on a Friday—and read ſome good book, on the Sabbath evenings, to as many as came to his houſe, which was, alſo, open, night and morning, for ſuch ſpiritual fools as delighted in ſinging and prayer."

I have been accuſed, likewiſe, of "ſoliciting ſubſcriptions for building a conventicle in the pariſh of Dunſford" If I apprehend the word right, a conventicle is an *aſſembly of people*. Now, how I could, with money, build an aſſembly of people, I cannot really underſtand: Therefore, I leave the building of it to that *wiſe* Architect who framed the petition—out of nothing; and, who, I fear, has not taken JESUS CHRIST *for his corner-ſtone*. But, perhaps, by a figure of Rhetoric, this famous Juggler has changed the people into the houſe that contains them. Suppoſe it ſo——It, then, means, (according to the ſenſe of the 22d Canon) a houſe for the reception of Miniſters, or other perſons, who "meet together to conſult upon any matter, or courſe to be taken by them, which may any way tend to the impeaching, or depraving of the doctrine of the Church of Ireland." But, did I ever aſſemble with any number of perſons,

for

for ſuch a purpoſe? The reverſe has been already ſhewn——I have always ſtood up as a moſt zealous advocate for the doctrines of our church; and, *thro' Chriſt ſtrengthning me*, will *earneſtly contend* for them, *reſiſting* all gain ſayers, *even unto blood.*

'Tis true that I once made a propoſal to Lord —— of quitting my cure, if he would give me 50 guineas for building a preaching-houſe. But, ſurely, this cannot be called "ſolliciting ſubſcriptions," as I never made a ſimilar application to any other perſon, in the pariſh of Ballyculter. It is evident, alſo, that, by ſuch a propoſal, I ſought not my own profit, as I was to give up fifty pounds per ann. in order to promote, what I ſuppoſed to be, the cauſe and glory of God. The motives by which I was actuated, in this inſtance, are recited in the 16th page.

Well—what remains next to be anſwered? A charge, that, "at one time, a number of my enthuſiaſtic followers came to my pariſh church, where many of them, in the midſt of ſermon, were ſeized with pretended convulſions." How inconſiſtent, and abſurd, is all this! It is firſt aſſerted, that they were *ſeized* with convulſions, and then, that theſe convulſions were *pretended.* And, ſurely, none but GOD, who *knows the ſecrets of the heart*, can determine, whether theſe fits (ſo called) were pretended, or not. Whoever poſitively declares on oath they were, is (I apprehend) chargeable with perjury. One of the witneſſes againſt me, after firſt ſwearing to the truth of this article, on his croſs examination, ſaid, that "theſe fits were inflicted by GOD ALMIGHTY," and defind them to be "irregular behaviour." But what, in reality, gave riſe

to

to this ſtrange accuſation? Why—it has juſtly appeared upon the trial, that, during morning ſervice, a few in the congregation were ſo affected, that ſome, out of gratitude to GOD for *what he had done for their ſouls*, clapped their hands, and cried aloud, "oh praiſe, praiſe, the LORD! glory, glory, be to GOD! let all the earth praiſe him;" while others, convinced of ſin, ſhouted out, in the emphatical words of our church, "LORD, have mercy upon us—CHRIST have mercy upon us!" Such cries, no doubt, created a great conſternation among the people. That part of the congregation, who had only *the form of godlineſs*, were offended, and thoſe who experienced *the power* rejoiced in the ſalvation of GOD. However, there was ſuch a noiſe from all quarters, that I was obliged to ſtop, in the midſt of prayer, not knowing what to do. At laſt, one MOSES SEED adviſed me to leave the deſk, and ſpeak to one who was loudly thanking GOD for his *unſpeakable gifts*. By degrees, ſhe grew quiet—and I deſired my wife, and another perſon, to go out of the church, with two or three, who were *weary and heavy-laden* with the burden of their ſins, in order to comfort thoſe *mourners in Zion*. Thus, I thought, I acted diſcreetly. The people within were pacified—the ſervice was reſumed—and GOD ſpoke peace to the contrite ſouls. But, how prepoſterous is it to make me accountable for the actions of others! if a merry wag had brought in a fiddle, and ſet the whole congregation a dancing, ſurely I am not reſponſible for their indecent behaviour.

It has been declared that the petitioners are "really afraid to permit their children to attend divine worſhip, leſt they ſhould either be infected with enthuſiaſm, or

driven

driven to deſpair of the mercy of GOD." O ſlanderous aſſertion! ſuch it has appeared on oath. Almoſt all their children do regularly attend my church, and I have always repreſented GOD as *ſlow to anger and of great kindneſs* willing *that all men ſhould come to the knowledge of the truth, and be ſaved.* And, indeed, many have found, to their unſpeakable joy, that he is a covenant-keeping GOD, *forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin.* *The love of* GOD, now a-days, is not very infectious; therefore, their fears about enthuſiaſm are groundleſs; for, tho' *the light ſhineth in darkneſs, yet the darkneſs comprehendeth it not.* Becauſe *the ſpiritual things of* GOD *are ſpiritually diſcerned, the natural man receiveth them not,* but eſteemeth them *fooliſhneſs.* For this reaſon, my Accuſers ſay, they are "really perſuaded that I am either a real Enthuſiaſt, or ſomething worſe; in either, a very improper perſon to have the care and direction of a pariſh." Enthuſiaſt! what do they underſtand by it? Why—"it is (ſaid one of them, on his examination) a man that is out of the way." Aye—ſo it is. He is *out of the way* of the world—*out of the way* of preferment—but *in the way*—the *narrow way that leads to* eternal *life.* The truth is, this is a cant word for every one that believes, *ſincerely* believes, he has a ſoul to be ſaved; and, accordingly, is *working out* his *ſalvation with fear, and with trembling.* Is it not ſtrange that the world will highly commend the conceited, unnatural, fancies of a Romancer, or the bombaſtic rants of a Dramatiſt, and yet decry all genuine, heart-felt religion, as the effect of an over-heated imagination. They can hear, with uncommon reliſh, the extravagant flights of *Shakeſpear*, on the ſtage; but when the rational truths of Chriſtianity are delivered with

with ſpirit, in the pulpit, they *ſavour not the things that be of* GOD. The theatre rings with ſhouts of applauſe, when diſtracted *Lear*, or *Hamlet*, bellow forth their unintelligible jargon; but the preacher that ſpeaks of *the love of* GOD *ſhed abroad in the heart, by the* HOLY GHOST *given*, will be looked upon as one out of his ſenſes, by all thoſe who live *without* GOD *in the world*, and who may, therefore, with the greateſt juſtice, be accounted mad. Happy, yea, thrice happy, is that chriſtian, who thus endures reproach for the cauſe of his MASTER, of whom the world ſaid, *he deceiveth the people*: his *is the kingdom of Heaven*. Therefore, if any of the Lords of the earth ſay to me, as FELIX to PAUL, *Thou art beſide thyſelf*, I will only pray for them, in the words of the Apoſtle, *I would to GOD, that ye were altogether ſuch as I am*; for be ye aſſured, *I ſpeak forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs. How long, ye fools, will ye hate knowledge! How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity!* Oh that ye would lay to heart the wiſdom of Solomon (chap. 2. 12. &c.) who deſcribes the *ungodly* as *reaſoning with themſelves, but not aright*, 'Let us oppreſs, and lie in wait for the righte-'ous man, becauſe he is not for our turn——he is 'clean contrary to our doings——he upbraideth us 'with our offending the law, and objecteth, to our 'infamy, the tranſgreſſings of our education. He pro-'feſſeth to have the knowledge of GOD, and he calleth 'himſelf the child of the LORD. He was made to 'reprove our thoughts——he is grievous unto us, even 'to behold: For, his life is not like other mens—— 'his ways are of another faſhion. We are eſteemed of 'him as counterfeits—he abſtaineth from our ways, as 'from filthineſs. He pronounceth the end of the juſt to-

'to be bleſſed, and maketh his boaſt that GOD is his 'father. Let us ſee if his words be true—let us exa- 'mine him, with deſpiteſulneſs and torture, that we 'may know his meekneſs, and prove his patience.' *Such things they did imagine, and were deceived; for, their own wickedneſs hath blinded them. As for the myſteries of* GOD, *they knew them not, neither hoped they for the wages of righteouſneſs, nor diſcerned a reward for blameleſs ſouls.* When the prodigal Son was weary of *feeding upon the huſks* of earthly vanities, with *the ſwine* of this world, who are *wallowing in the mire* of their own uncleanneſs, and accordingly ſaid, *I will ariſe, and go to my* FATHER, *and will ſay unto him,* FATHER, *I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son,* the ſacred Hiſtorian informs us that *he came to himſelf*, plainly intimating that he was *mad* before. But the world now quite reverſe the ſtory, and reckon him a frantic enthuſiaſt (tho' he never had any ſenſes 'till then) who is deſirous of *loving God with all his ſoul, with all his ſtrength, and with all his mind, and his neighbour as himſelf. Let them that name the name of* CHRIST (ſays the Apoſtle) *depart from all iniquity.* But, what will be the conſequence? Why (ſays Iſaiah) *he that departeth from evil maketh himſelf a prey. Which of the true Prophets have not* the children of Belial perſecuted? Therefore, as they always did, and ever will, *caſt out the name* of him *as evil*, who *reproveth in the gate*, whoever obtains from them the happy appellation of an Enthuſiaſt, is the only proper "perſon to have the care and direction of a pariſh:" Or, if he be repreſented as "ſomething worſe," it ſhould be ſet down as almoſt a general rule that he is *ſomething better* than the ordi-

nary

mary rank even of true Chriſtians. Indeed, I confeſs myſelf undeſerving of the high, and glorious, title of *a Chriſtian*: But, if I am *counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for* CHRIST's *name*, therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice, ſaying with DAVID, when derided for dancing before the ark, *I will yet be more vile.*

But how do the petitioners conclude? They "humbly pray" to their Biſhop "to vacate my licenſe." For what? For no other reaſon but this, that I would not *vacate* the word of GOD, and give *a licenſe* to ſin. Oh that they would now "humbly pray" to God, that he might not *enter into judgment* with them!

I have now gone thro' the ſeveral parts of that defamatory petition; from the contents of which it appears, that the Devil was angry at the demolition of his kingdom, and, therefore, ſtirred up his emiſſaries to *make war with them who keep the commandments of* GOD, *and have the teſtimony of JESUS CHRIST.* But *greater is he that has been for me than all thoſe which were againſt me*, even the LORD who has *delivered me out of the paw of the lion.*

But as *the wicked are like the troubled ſea, which cannot reſt*, I have been attacked, in the public prints, by malicious enemies, who would fain perſuade the world that I am guilty of the offences which I have been accuſed of, but that, on account of *trifling* irregularities (ſuch as *forgery and perjury*) they could not *legally* condemn me. It may be, therefore, neceſſary to lay before the reader ſome events, which have occured ſince the trial.

Immediately

Immediately after it ended, I told ſome of the Biſhop's acquaintances in Liſburn, that as my character (for the ſupport of which I ſtood the trial) was now firmly eſtabliſhed by my victory over them that were *ready to ſwallow me up*, I would reſign my Cure directly: and, accordingly, I told the church-wardens that I deſigned to preach my farewell ſermon, on the following Sunday. But my enemies were ſo chagrined at their diſappointment, that they maliciouſly propagated a report that my abdication was not voluntary, but that the B———p (being very *compaſſionate*) allowed me to ſtay in the Cure for a ſhort time, leſt I ſhould not ſucceed to another in a different dioceſe. The ſtory was plauſible, and gained ground with the populace: ſo that in order to prove it's falſity, I informed the pariſhioners (from the chancel) that as ſuch a ſlanderous rumour had been ſpread, and credited, I was determined to ſtay longer in the Cure.

Meanwhile, the following piece of intelligence appeared in the Belfaſt paper. "Yeſterday ended the trial of the Rev. Edward Smyth, who was honourably acquitted." In ſeven days after, the V——r G——l of Down was pleaſed to addreſs the public.

To the PRINTERS *of the* BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

'*Gentlemen*,

'AS I ſaw a paragraph, in your paper of Tueſday 'laſt, relative to the trial of the Rev. Edward Smyth, 'Curate of the pariſh of Ballyculter; which I imagine, 'was inſerted, purpoſely to miſlead the public; I there-

'fore

'fore think it incumbent upon me to inform you, that 'Mr. Smyth was not honourably acquitted as in said 'paragraph aſſerted, but the trial was diſmiſſed, on 'account of ſome irregularities committed in the courſe 'of the proceedings.

'I am, Gentlemen,

'your obedient ſervant,

'RALPH WARD, Vicar-
'General of Down.'

I anſwered him thus.

To the PRINTERS *of the* BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

'*Gentlemen*,

'AS my trial has become a matter of public noto-'riety, a plain recital of facts will beſt elucidate Mr. 'Ward's myſterious advertiſement, which was evident-'ly calculated to "miſlead" the ignorant. On the laſt 'day the court met, he himſelf avows, that the cauſe '"was diſmiſſed on account of ſome irregularities com-'mitted in the courſe of the proceedings," on the part 'of my proſecutors. I then wrote to the Lord Bp. 'of Down, requeſting him (as my innocence was in-'conteſtably proved) to give me a more public acquittal, 'either in the church of Down, or Liſburn; or elſe, to 'advertiſe it in your paper. His Lordſhip anſwered, 'that it was unprecedented in any judge to advertiſe 'his deciſions, and that he had already acquitted me 'in the moſt public manner poſſible, even in the court 'where the trial was held. It is evident, from his 'Lordſhip's words, that he conſidered me as innocent

'of

'of the accuſations laid againſt me. And is not Mr. 'Ward's own confeſſion tantamount to an acquittal, 'which was certainly given me, otherwiſe I would have 'been diſpoſſeſſed of my cure, which I ſtill hold. 'Why, then, ſuch quibbling upon words? In a ſhort 'time, it ſhall appear, that ſomething more than "irregularities" have been "committed;" therefore, 'the public are requeſted to ſuſpend their judgment, 'till an account of the trial be publiſhed.

'EDWARD SMYTH.'

After mature deliberation, his father (then in Lord ——'s houſe) took up his gooſe-quill.

To the PRINTERS *of the* BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

'*Gentlemen,*

'AS a paragraph appeared in your paper of the '29th of November laſt, falſly aſſerting that the Rev. 'Edward Smyth was honourably acquitted at the 'concluſion of his trial; and as an advertiſement has 'ſince been publiſhed on the 13th inſt. ſigned Edward 'Smyth, repeating the falſhood contained in the ſaid 'paragraph, (which paragraph was contradicted by 'the Vicar General in his advertiſement of the 10th 'inſtant) and further aſſerting that the Biſhop of Down, 'in reply to a letter from ſaid Mr. Smyth, "requeſt-'ing him (as his innocence was inconteſtably proved) 'to give him a more public acquittal, either in the 'church of Down or Liſburn; or elſe to advertiſe it in 'your paper," had anſwered, "that it was unprece-'dented in any Judge to advertiſe his deciſions, and

'that

'that he had already acquitted him in the moſt public 'manner poſſible, even in the court where the trial 'was held;'—which advertiſement was inſerted ſince 'my ſon Mr. Ward left this country, and ſeems to 'have been intended to throw an imputation on his 'credit, and conveys an inſinuation, that the Biſhop's 'private opinion was, that the charges exhibited by 'the pariſhioners of Ballyculter againſt ſaid Mr. Smyth 'were groundleſs. Now I am authorized by the beſt 'authority to aſſure the public, that the Biſhop of 'Down never ſaid, either in public or private, that 'Mr. Smyth was acquitted either honourably or other-'wiſe; that he never authoriſed any perſon to ſay that 'he was acquitted in his opinion; that he never was 'in the court where the trial was held; and, that the 'cauſe was diſmiſſed by his order, not from want of 'evidence, but only on account of ſome irregularities 'committed in the courſe of the proceedings, as is truly 'and faithfully mentioned by Mr. Ward in his adver-'tiſement.

'From theſe incontеſtible facts, the public will be 'enabled to judge what credit is due to Mr. Smyth's 'printed declarations; eſpecially as Mr. Smyth himſelf 'acknowledges, that Mr. Ward, before he went into 'court to diſmiſs the cauſe, told him that it was to be 'diſmiſſed for the reaſon abovementioned.

'I am, Gentlemen,

'your moſt humble ſervant,

Dec. 18, 1776. 'BERNARD WARD.'

In the next paper, the following Rejoinder came out.

To the PRINTERS *of the* BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

'*Gentlemen*, *Dec. 23d*, 1776.

'MY word is as ſacred as the REVEREND Bernard 'Ward's, and HIS *ipſe dixit* ſhould not meet with 'better credit, at leaſt, than mine. If his "ſon left 'the country" immediately after his ænigmatical affirma-'tions, was I, therefore, bound to ſuppreſs my anſwer, 'which came out as ſoon as it could poſſibly be printed? 'Had I been pleaſed to "throw an imputation on his 'credit," I juſtly might; as he declared that the para-'graph relative to my trial was in your paper of the '3d inſt. which is a well known "falſhood:" But, 'hereby, he thought to make the unthinking vulgar 'believe that he anſwered *that* paragraph directly after 'it's firſt appearance, and did not take time to conſult 'with the *principalities and powers* which are engag-'ed againſt me. Is he not alſo chargeable with injuſtice 'and ignorance, when he ſat as Judge of a court to try 'me, though the proceedings were irregular? Does 'not his own mouth condemn him? Had the Biſhop 'ſent his anſwer in writing, which I once requeſted, 'then all miſconſtructions would have been prevented. 'I was well aware that private converſations might be 'denied, and therefore, when Mr. Trail came, one 'night, with a verbal meſſage from his Lordſhip, and 'wanted to call me out of the room where ſome friends 'were aſſembled, I told him there was nothing he 'could have to ſay which they might not be privy to. 'Let his Lordſhip's opinion be what it will, certain it 'is, I have faithfully recited the anſwer given to my 'letter, as mentioned in my laſt advertiſement. If his

'meſſenger

'meſſenger did not deliver it agreeable to his mind, the 'fault lies in him, not in me. Will Mr. Trail give his 'affidavit, confuting my poſitions? If ſo, I ſhall ac-'knowledge the badneſs of my memory; but if not, the 'community is left to believe which party they pleaſe. 'Mr. Ward may be "authorized by the beſt authority" 'to gainſay my former aſſertions; but, however 'GREAT, *little* I now venture to contradict it: And, 'though the diſmiſſion of a cauſe is, in effect, an ac-'quittal, yet (to put a ſtop to this paper war) I hope, 'and requeſt the Lord Biſhop of Down will declare 'whether I am guilty, or not, of the charges lately laid 'againſt me; that, if condemned, I may appeal to a 'higher court (where juſtice may be hoped for) or if 'acquitted, my character may no longer ſuffer by the 'miſrepreſentations of ill-minded men, who ſhew their 'teeth when they cannot bite; and who, by their pre-'ſent aſperſions are in hopes to prejudice the minds of 'the people againſt my intended publication, which '(they are well aſſured) will expoſe their iniquitous 'meaſures. Should his Lordſhip decline giving a deter-'minate ſentence, by ſaying "The cauſe has been 'already diſmiſſed, and, therefore, will not admit of it," 'I now put all my former proſecutors, or (to ſpeak 'more properly) perſecutors, to open defiance. I 'challenge them to draw up another petition, and pro-'ceed *regularly* againſt me: Then, I truſt, I ſhall be 'enabled to maintain my cauſe, and to *give a reaſon of 'the hope that is in me.*' Confident I am that nothing 'can be proved againſt me, but that I preach in *the 'ſtreets and lanes of the city*; and ſhould I be *put 'out of the Synagogue* by *the Rulers and Elders*, for

'doing good, in following the example of the TRUE 'BISHOP *of Souls*, it will reflect more dishonour on 'them, than on,

'Gentlemen,

'your obedient humble servant,

EDWARD SMYTH.

Exasperated at the discovery of their disingenuous mode of acting, and knowing that I intended to make it still more public, they concluded that a revocation of my license might be a means of prepossessing many thoughtless people against me who judge only by outward appearances. No other reason can be assigned for the arbitrary measure which was put in force; especially when it is considered that they themselves were acquainted with my intention of quietly retiring, in a short time. Hitherto the B—— (who has always studiously avoided popular odium) had not *seemingly* interested himself in the affair: But now the mask was put off—and he shewed himself *propriâ personâ*, in his true colours. No doubt, he knew that the misconduct of the officers of his court would, in some measure, devolve upon himself. In hopes, therefore, to silence the general out-cry which was raised against my persecutors, and to gratify the resentment of his brother Lord, he came down to C——e-w——d, (on the day before the nativity) where they sat in council upon me.

The next day, going to church precisely at the usual time, I was surprized to see Mr. Bernard Ward in the reading-desk, and to find that a great part of the service was over. However, I peaceably kneeled down beside him

him, and when the litany was ended, saw the B—— go out of Lord ————'s seat into the chancel, before the first line of the psalm was sung. As St. Paul had commanded all things to be *done decently, and in order*, in the church, I waited 'till the doxology was given out, and then followed the B——— and read the epistle for the day. From the communion table he went directly to the pulpit where he sat while the second psalm was singing. After sermon, I returned with him to administer the Lord's supper (that badge of Christian charity) which Lord ——— and his family, Sir John P——ll, Mr. T——l and Mr. W——d, received at my hands.

Who could think that any mischief was hatching against me at that table of love; or that they could *offer their gift at the altar*, without being *first reconciled to their brother?* But the reader may form some judgment of the state of their minds, when I inform him of the treatment I afterwards met with. On the next Saturday, I received a paper, containing the following words.

James, by Divine Permission, Bishop of Down and Connor: To our *beloved in* Christ the Rev. James Dickson Clerk, Dean of our Cathedral Church of Down, greeting. Whereas by our License or Letters of Cure, bearing date the 23d day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-three; We did appoint the Rev. Edward Smyth, Curate of Ballyculter, a member of your Deanery, and in our diocese of Down. Now, in as much as the said Edward Smyth has by his conduct and behaviour in the parish of Ballyculter, aforesaid, given most just cause of offence, not only to the parishioners

oners of the ſaid pariſh, but to many ſober and diſcreet perſons in the neighbourhood; WE, therefore, do think proper to revoke and annul, and by theſe preſents, WE do revoke and annul the Licenſe, or Letters of Cure, ſo granted to the ſaid Mr. Smyth. And WE do deſire that you will nominate any other PROPER perſon to be licenſed as Curate of the ſaid pariſh. And WE do hereby inhibit the ſaid Mr. Smyth from preaching, or officiating, in any church within OUR united dioceſes of Down and Connor. And it is OUR further will and pleaſure that the ſaid Mr. Smyth be ſerved with an authentic copy of this order, and inhibition and that one other authentic copy of the ſame be affixed upon the church-door of the pariſh of Ballyculter. Given under OUR Epiſcopal Seal, this 23d day of December, one thouſand, ſeven hundred, and ſeventy-ſix.

A true copy which I atteſt. RALPH MARMION, Not. Pub. Regr.

SEAL —— James Down and Connor.

I told the meſſenger I ſhould not obey his Lordſhip's orders.

Next day, before 11 o'clock, I went to the church, and found the two church-wardens poſted, like centinels, at the out-ſide of the door, and another man at the inſide, who ſaid the B—— had given them orders not to let any one in 'till he came.

To loſe no time, I kneeled down in the porch with ſome people who were aſſembled there, and while praying for my perſecutors, Mr. W——d and Mr. T——l, ſcrambled thro' us, 'till they got to the door, which was immediately opened for them.

Having

Having finiſhed my prayer, I followed them in, and demanded by what authority they attempted to ſit in my deſk. Mr. W——d anſwered, "you may read it on the church door." "Sir (ſaid I) I deny it to be ſufficient," and aſked him again the ſame queſtion. "Well then (replied he) 'tis by my own authority; for I am Curate of this pariſh." "If you be (ſaid I again) ſhew me your licenſe—I can produce mine, and I inſiſt on officiating here this day." I then made a gentle effort to get into the deſk, but he violently oppoſed me, and thruſt me out. "Mr. W——d (continued I) *the weapons of my warfare are not carnal*, I ſhall not therefore reſiſt you with the arm of fleſh." Mighty fine! (replied he) but I ſhall expoſe your hypocritical doings." "I thank you, Mr. W——d,—I ſhall not *render* unto you *evil for evil, or railing for railing!*" "I tell you what (he then ſaid) if you diſturb the congregation any more, I ſhall put you in the ſtocks, and then ſend you to Down jail." I anſwered, "You will only ſerve me as the magiſtrates did St. Paul, whoſe *feet were made faſt in the ſtocks*, and who was *caſt into priſon*: And I truſt I ſhould *rejoice in being counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Chriſt.*" I then made a ſecond attempt, but was forcibly repulſed; on which, I walked out of the church, ſaying with Moſes, "*who's on the Lord's ſide, who?*" and all that were in it, except five or ſix followed me. After ſinging a hymn, I was informed that the B——— was expected, and therefore waited for his arrival. In ſome time, he drove up in Lord ———'s coach, and on his ſtepping out, I aſked him by what authority he took upon him to withdraw my licenſe. He anſwered "by my own."

Fearing that ſervice would begin the inſtant he appeared in the church, (to prevent my talking) I immediately went to the deſk again, and claimed entrance there. Mr. W——d told me repeatedly,—and warmly, I ſhould not get in; and, taking me by the ſhoulders, uſed greater violence than before.

Turning about to the congregation, I then ſaid, "Who's for CHRIST, and who's for Baal? Let ſuch of you as are for CHRIST follow me, and ſince they will not let me preach in the *inſide* of the church, I will preach at the *outſide*." Accordingly, the majority of the pariſhioners came after me, and a woman cried out aloud, in the iſle, "Rejoice—the Lord is King."

I was much comforted, while exhorting them to *continue ſtedfaſt in the faith*, and warning them that it was *thro' much tribulation they muſt enter into the kingdom of Heaven*—Some, *ſtrong in the* LORD, *and in the power of his might*, rejoiced that *Chriſt* called me to *the fellowſhip of his ſufferings*; while others, *weak in the faith*, *wept bitterly*, leſt they ſhould be *ſcattered, as ſheep having no ſhepherd*. After *commending them to God and the word of his grace*, I departed from them, and ſet off for Dublin, where I was informed by a very eminent Proctor and lawyer, that the B——'s proceedings were altogether illegal: For, my licenſe was not *during pleaſure* (as moſt letters of Cure are) and a regular complaint ſhould have been lodged againſt me, which the B—— ought to have tried in a judicial capacity, and then to have pronounced his ſentence.

Perhaps

Perhaps the reader may now be anxious to know what paſſed within the church, or rather, the walls that contained the church; tho' it is a doubt with me whether there was a church there that day; as (according to one of our own articles) it means "a congregation of faithful people, where the pure word of God is preached." I am ſure, however, that one ſentence of the ſermon was pure. What was it?——The text—viz. *Let your light ſo ſhine before men that they may ſee your good works, and glorify your* FATHER *which is in Heaven.* But how did the GREAT Preacher let his *light ſhine* that day? By extinguiſhing mine—by turning a Chriſtian-heretic out of the Jewiſh Synagogue. Herein ſuppoſing he fulfilled the deſign of *God*, who hath ſaid, *the light of the wicked ſhall be put out, and the ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine.* But, peradventure, others may ſay, *woe unto him*—for he has *called evil good, and good evil*, and has *put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs.*

But, by *ſeeing* his GOOD *works*, did others *glorify* their *Father?* Yes—in the ſame manner he did—by perſecuting thoſe who would not *bow the knee to Baal.* No doubt, they thought they were *doing* GOD *ſervice* when they turned large helpleſs families adrift, by ſeizing on, and canting, all their little ſubſtance. Like zealous *Saul*, they are *yet breathing out threatning and ſlaughter againſt the diſciples of the* LORD. Oh that they may hear his voice ſaying unto each of them, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me? For inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, you have done it unto* ME.

But, who is their Father? Not HE *which is in Heaven*—The *Jews*, who were *seeking to kill* CHRIST, had the assurance to say, *Abraham is our Father.* But what answer did HE make them? *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.*

Let us now reflect a little upon the contents of the Inhibition.

In the days of CHRIST, there was one JAMES, who, *by divine permission*, was appointed Bishop, or Overseer, of the Church of GOD. Tho' the whole world was his diocese, and he laboured like a faithful steward, yet his revenue was——afflictions, bonds, and death. But as the practice and income of his name-sake is so very different, it is to be feared he only enjoys his high office by *human permission.* Whosoever of you (says the LORD of Lords) will be the chiefest shall be servant of all; and, to set us an example of humility, he *washed the feet of his Disciples.* But to such a height is pride now advanced, that there are *Lords over* GOD's *heritage*, each of whom would have the world look upon him as GOD, who, when speaking of HIMSELF uses the plural number, as being three persons in one God-head. This mode of language, a worm, raised from the dunghill, has adopted, saying, "WE do inhibit Mr. Smyth from preaching or officiating in any church within OUR diocese. And what reason is assigned for such imperious procedure? He asserts in general terms that I have "given most just cause of offence, by my conduct and behaviour,

not

not only to the parishioners of Ballyculter, but to many sober and discreet persons in the neighbourhood."

All this is very true——for, *good* "conduct and behaviour is a thing that never can be forgiven by the world, because it proves, more plainly than *words* can do that *their deeds are evil*: And, therefore, CHRIST said to his Disciples, *It is impossible but that offences will come.* For instance. When the *honest* Baptist reproved Herod for adultery, what was the consequence? He lost his *head.*—Happy I! who have only lost my *Cure.*—Whoever has read the beginning of this tract may easily discover the person who was displeased with me, and may, also, ascertain the cause. I exposed vice, both privately, and publicly. Now, what umbrage could this have given to "sober and discreet persons?" *Such* were no way concerned in my reproofs: Consequently, it must have been the *intemperate* and *indiscreet*—the *whore-mongers*, and *lovers of pleasure* that were offended—for, the galled horse will wince.

Has it not been proved, by the concurrent testimony of many witnesses, that all the parishioners (except six, seven, or eight persons) highly loved, and respected me? If, then, a certain GREAT man had not been my professed enemy, I should have been still called "Beloved in CHRIST," as well as "D——n D——n". Had not the Apostle forbidden us to *measure or compare* ourselves with others; perhaps, in this instance, I might be tempted to *think more highly of myself than I ought to think.* But, while he is "beloved," I am *hated in* CHRIST. *Anathema maranatha* has been pronounced against me. But so it must needs be:

For

For CHRIST hath ſaid, *The world will* HATE *you whom I have choſen out of the world.* Can the *Servant* expect better uſage than his *Lord?* In vain did Pilate aſk, "*Why—what evil hath he done?*" The *chief* prieſts *cried out the more, let* HIM *be crucified —away with this man, and releaſe unto us Barabbas.——Now, Barabbas was a Robber.*

Whoever is like him will be allowed to preach, and every pulpit be open for him. But, tho' there was not even a charge of the leaſt immorality againſt me, I have not only been excluded from my own Cure, but alſo *put out of* every *Synagogue* in the dioceſe of D———n. *What ſhall we then ſay to theſe things?* Perhaps, reader, you may object, "I have only your word for the ſtrange aſſertion."

Well—the following fact is a convincing proof. There have been two petitions preſented at different times to THE B——, accuſing a Miniſter with frequent drunkenneſs (even during ſervice) curſing and damning his pariſhioners—beating his wife—abſenting himſelf from his church even for many Sabbath-days together —and total neglect of every occaſional duty; yet he was ſuffered to go unpuniſhed, unreproved, and he ſtill continues in his Cure, tho' nine men attended the viſitation, to prove all their allegations upon oath— But theſe are only *common* crimes, and, therefore, unworthy of notice; whereas, *preaching from houſe to houſe*, and reproving the wicked are vices ſo *uncommon*,—ſo heinous—as to be inexcuſable.

From the above anecdote we may conclude, that another DIVINE like him, will be reckoned "a *proper* per-

perſon to be licenſed to the Cure of Ballyculter," as ſuch a character will beſt tally with the diſpoſitions of ſome of the leading men in it.

Some time ago, I ſaw a letter from D——n D——, wherein he gave the following orders to his agent—"Send me all the money you can poſſibly ſcrape together, as I want to ſtock a farm which I have lately bought. Let not one of the Curates be paid 'till next month, except Mr. Smyth (if he ſhould call for his ſalary) as there are none of them *worth a farthing*, but himſelf." Yet notwithſtanding the D——n's favourable opinion of me, I have been perſecuted almoſt unto death, and the others are ſuffered to *dwell at eaſe*. This (ſays the B——) is "OUR will and pleaſure:" And, to ſhew the immutability of his purpoſe, which (like *the law of the Medes and Perſians*) *altereth not*, he adds, "Given under OUR epiſcopal ſeal."

How widely different is *his* (I beg his pardon, I ſhould ſay, THEIR) *ſeal* from that of the firſt Biſhops of the Church. St. Paul addreſſes the Corinthians thus: "*The* SEAL *of my Apoſtleſhip are ye in the* LORD, *who hath alſo* SEALED *us, and given the earneſt of the* SPIRIT *in our hearts.* Thus we find that GOD and his TRUE Miniſters made their impreſſion on the *hearts* of men, but our modern B——— makes his impreſſion on inanimate *wax*, or *wafers*. By this *outward* SEAL, he (or THEY, if his Worſhip pleaſes) excludes from the *worldly* church, erected with hands—but, by an *inward* SEAL, St. Paul admitted members into the *ſpiritual* church of CHRIST, *not made with hands*. In ſhort, the one built up the temple of God,

God, and the other endeavours to pull it down. Nevertheleſs (ſays the Apoſtle) *the foundation of* GOD *ſtandeth ſure, having this* SEAL, *the* LORD *knoweth them who are* HIS: therefore, his L——d's Inhibition is of no conſequence, as the members of CHRIST's myſtical body can neither ſtand nor fall by his impotent efforts. I am perfectly content not to preach within any of the church-walls in his (or THEIR) dioceſe. Let him and all who are tenacious of the dignity of *bells, ſteeples, forms, and ſurplices*, preach to *lime, ſtone, and velvet cuſhions*; but, for my part, I think the canopy of Heaven is a very good ſounding board: And when *the Saints and faithful in* CHRIST JESUS are aſſembled together (tho' it be upon a *mountain*) *there* is ſuch a CHURCH as *the gates of hell* ſhall not prevail againſt.——But I have digreſſed.

When in Dublin, the Belfaſt paper was ſent to me, wherein I found the following paragraph, and advertiſement.

On the 23d of this month the Biſhop of Down revoked the licenſe, or letters of cure, granted to Mr. Smyth for Ballyculter, and has inhibited him from officiating or preaching in any church in the dioceſes of Down or Connor.

THO' I think it both unneceſſary and improper to make an affidavit in oppoſition to any aſſertions of Mr. Smyth, yet in juſtice to Mr. Ward, I think it incumbent on me publicly to declare, that no meſſage was conveyed by me from the Biſhop of Down to Mr. Smyth, implying that he was acquitted, and that Mr. Ward's advertiſement, as far as Mr. Smyth has choſen to repreſent me as concerned in this affair, is perfectly candid

did and juſt. I muſt add, likewiſe, that when I delivered the meſſage from the Biſhop which has been ſo groſsly miſrepreſented, I found Mr. Smyth alone; and I now regret that no candid perſon was preſent, as it might have prevented this diſagreeable altercation. I have authority from Mr. Ward to ſay, that no farther notice will be taken of any aſſertions of Mr. Smyth relative to this affair.

Dec. 27, 1776. WM. TRAIL.

An anſwer was ſent to the printers——but they declined publiſhing it. I ſhall, therefore, inſert it here, and require thoſe concerned in it to give the beſt reply they can.

To the PRINTERS *of the* BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

Dublin, Jan. 6th, 1777.

Gentlemen,

IT has been lately affirmed in your paper, that "on the *twenty-third*" of December laſt, "the Biſhop of Down revoked my licenſe." Had it been true, why ſhould the propagator be aſhamed to put his ſignature to it? Will my adverſaries never have done lying? Surely, they will not dare to deny that I read part of the communion-ſervice, and adminiſtered the Sacrament, in the church of Ballyculter, on the *twenty-fifth* inſt. in the very preſence of Mr. W——d Mr. T—l and the B——, whoſe arbitrary Inhibition, moreover, was not ſent to me till *three* days *after*. But this anonymous author wanted to palliate the behaviour of his Lordſhip, and Mr. W——d, who went to my church,

church, on Chriſtmas day, half an hour before the uſual time; and (without giving me the leaſt previous notice) uſurped the authority of preaching and reading the morning ſervice. Beſides, by this falſe intelligence, he hoped to make the public conclude that my licenſe was not withdrawn from any reſentment occaſioned by my advertiſements, which "brought to light the hidden things of darkneſs;" and that Lord —— (to whoſe houſe the B—— came on the *twenty-fourth* of December) did not interfere.

EDWARD SMYTH.

To Mr. T R A I L.

REV. SIR,

I am glad your conſcience is ſo much awake as to prevent your making an affidavit; and ſince I find you ſo *honeſt*, now beg leave to put a few queſtions to you, which, I hope, will finally determine this controverſy.

Why did you come, at *night*, with *verbal* anſwers to letters *written* in the *morning*? Did I not requeſt the Biſhop's reply to one of them, *in writing*? If you were deſirous that the truth might be known, ſhould not this very circumſtance have put you on your guard againſt ſpeaking *privately* to me? Notwithſtanding this warning, did you not once call me out of the room, where witneſſes were preſent? From my refuſal, is it not evident that I wiſhed every tranſaction which paſſed between us to be done openly, and fairly? Did I not

perſonally

perſonally wait upon the B—— (who was denied to me, according to your own confeſſion) for an anſwer to a note which I had been expecting for many hours? If you confeſſed the converſation as I truly ſtated it, would not your uncle be diſpleaſed, and his revocation of my letters of Cure appear more deſpotic?

Theſe queries I hope you will candidly anſwer; otherwiſe, unfavourable conſtructions muſt be put upon your ſilence. But, indeed, they are unanſwerable—they carry ſelf-evidence along with them—and every attempt to contradict them will only make you ſtumble more. You are yourſelf ſenſible of it, and therefore have declared that "no farther notice will be taken of the aſſertions" of

your humble ſervant,

EDWARD SMYTH.

I can now appeal to the Searcher of hearts, and truly ſay, that, in the paſt narrative, I have ſtrictly adhered to the truth, as far as I knew it: And if any circumſtance ſeems exaggerated, extenuated, or miſrepreſented, let it be animadverted on, and I ſhall either *prove* my aſſertions, or acknowledge my error.

Had I choſen to indulge a ſatyrical humour, I might have inſerted many incidents which would have recommended this piece to thoſe who delight in ſcandal; but I have forborn. The truth I was obliged to tell, in defence of my own reputation, and of the *ſound form of words* which I have eſpouſed. And, indeed,

indeed, when *truth* expoſes *falſhood*, it will appear harſh and ſevere, tho' it be expreſſed in the ſofteſt, mildeſt language. If my antagoniſts had it on their ſide, they would have made me appear in a moſt heinous light to the world. As far as they could, they exerted all their malice againſt me; but, praying (with David) "Keep me O LORD from the ſnare "that they have laid for me, and from the traps of the "wicked-doers, then the ungodly fell into their own "nets together, whilſt I withall eſcaped them."

Some may imagine that I have born too hard upon the B——. I ſolemnly aſſure ſuch objectors, that, in the firſt place, I have advanced nothing but what will admit of clear proof; and ſecondly, that I have not the leaſt perſonal reſentment againſt him. Far—far be that paſſion—that diabolical principle from my breaſt. I well know that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of GOD." There is no poſſible good that I would not, at this moment, moſt willingly do for him; and it was partly in hopes of opening "the eyes of his underſtanding" to ſee "the things which make for his peace," that I have laid his conduct before the *eyes* of his *body*. May he look upon the hideous picture, and, affrighted with the view, never give occaſion to have ſuch another likeneſs drawn!

The example of a man in power has, alſo, great prevalence with the world; eſpecially, when he is in the miniſtry, and has the character of an affable, eaſy, well-tempered man. Both his precept and practice, if they be not conformable to the ſpirituality of GOD's law, have a moſt dangerous tendency—they will ſcat-

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ter poiſon far and wide. If by his own daily deportment, public preaching, or private converſation, he encourages the ſilly diverſions of the age (fit only for children) what a latitude does he give to the thoughtleſs, careleſs ſinners——to the fluttering, gaudy belles and beaus, that are flying about like butter-flies, and "ſpeaking VANITY every one to his neighbour?" If he gives them a yard, they will take an ell, as they think there is no neceſſity of being as good as a Miniſter, of whom *much will be required*. So that when a ſervant of the moſt high GOD tells them, that they *who live in pleaſure are dead while they live*—and that *inſtead of well-ſet hair, there ſhall be baldneſs, and burning inſtead of beauty*—they have a reply at their tongue's end, "Sure, there's the B—— of —— that *good* man—he plays cards every night, and goes to aſſemblies, and thinks there's no harm in enjoying the *innocent* amuſements of life." Why this was the very way the Prieſts, in old times, deceived the people. How bitterly does God complain of them! 'From the 'prophet unto the prieſt, every one dealeth falſly: 'They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my 'people ſlightly, ſaying PEACE, PEACE, when there 'is no peace.—They ſay ſtill unto them that deſpiſe 'me, the LORD hath ſaid, ye ſhall have PEACE; and 'they ſay unto every one that walketh after the imagi-'nation of his own heart, no evil ſhall come upon you.' But, what is the warning which God gives? 'Hearken 'not unto the words of the prophets that propheſy unto 'you—they make you VAIN—they ſpeak a viſion of 'their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the 'LORD. I have not ſent theſe Prophets, yet they 'ran,'—for preferment in the church—"I have not ſpoken to them, yet they propheſied." Then HE

points

points out to us the method of discerning the *true* Prophets from the *false*. If they had stood in my 'counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, 'then they should have turned them from their evil 'way, and from the evil of their doings.' From hence 'tis plain that they are the only Embassadors of God who reclaim the ungodly, by setting before them the awful threatnings which HE has denounced against them, and which HE will infallibly execute. But while they are thus fulfilling their sacred commission, they will *be made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions*; and the Prophets that *speak smooth things*, will be admired, and caressed by all—that *know not God*.

Now, tho' by such complacency of behaviour they gain the approbation of *men*, yet they forfeit the favour of GOD. However strange the assertion may appear, yet it is an undoubted truth, that "the friendship of this "world is enmity with GOD: whosoever, therefore, "will be a FRIEND of the world is the enemy of "GOD." Nay, start not, reader—I still insist upon it, and on good authority too—for these are the words of an inspired Apostle [James. 4. 4.] Perhaps you may say that I have wrested the text, and that it is, certainly, every one's duty to live in friendship with the world. I will readily allow that it is incumbent upon us, *as far as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all men*; but, notwithstanding all our endeavours to *dwell together in unity*, it will be utterly impossible, if we be true, genuine, Bible-christians. If we comply with this scripture-rule, "Be not conformed to this world, but "be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds,"

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our manner of life will differ ſo widely from the ways, maxims, and corrupt *faſhions* of this world *which paſs away*, that men will *ſeparate* us *from their company*: And when, like David, we would *ſpeak to them of peace*, they will only *make them ready to battle*. *Can two walk together* upon earth, *except they be agreed?* Surely, not—therefore, the ſeed of the *woman*, and the ſeed of the *ſerpent* will be at conſtant variance with each other. They are ſerving different Maſters. The *one* is worſhipping the LORD his GOD, "thro' ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience,"—the *other* is "led captive by the Devil at his will," being *carnal*, and *ſold under ſin*.——They are going different roads. *One* is walking warily in the "narrow path that leadeth unto life,"——the *other* is running headlong in the "broad way that leadeth to deſtruction."—Their purſuits are different. The one is ſeeking "a building of GOD eternal in the Heavens," and is "labouring after that meat which endureth unto everlaſting life,"—the *other*, regardleſs of futurity, conſiders only "the temporal things which are ſeen" and "labours after that meat which periſheth."—In ſhort, the *one* aſſociates with "the Saints that are in the earth, and the excellent in whom is all *his* delight;" while the *other* is *a companion of fools*, and not only does thoſe things which "are worthy of death, but has pleaſure in them that do them."

The world (ſays our LORD) *loveth it's own*. If, therefore, any Miniſter coincides with it's humours, in his life and doctrine, he will be ſet up as a pattern of piety, ſenſe, and good-nature; and almoſt every individual

dividual will ſay of him, "He is one of the beſt men in the world." Alas! alas! there cannot be a ſurer ſign of his total alienation from God and godlineſs—he is an *enemy of the croſs of* CHRIST. The *deſpiſed* JESUS of Nazareth bore witneſs to the truth of this, when he ſaid, "That which is highly eſteemed "amongſt MEN is abomination in the ſight of GOD:" And again, particularly alluding to Miniſters, He ſaid, "wo unto you, when all men ſpeak WELL of you; for ſo did your fathers to the FALSE Prophets."

The *children of night and of darkneſs* always did, and ever will, *ſpeak well* of him who ſooths them in their vices. While they are ſuffered to go on unmoleſted, enjoying the pleaſures of ſin, and are countenanced in their follies by one who ſhould rather "cauſe them to know their abominations," they will as naturally love and reſpect *him*, as they will perſecute *another* who tells them without hypocriſy, that "the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs and ungodlineſs of men." They cannot bear the galling truth——it ſtrikes too home—it cuts too deep; and therefore they reckon the honeſt preacher who deals thus impartially with them, a rude uncharitable Monſter: While he that *builds up* the *wall* of their ſelf-righteouſneſs, and *daubs it with untempered mortar*, will meet with univerſal applauſe.

This is more particularly the caſe when he is not openly vicious, but tolerably moral in his conduct—having *a name to live*, while, *behold he is dead*. If he be not *an adulterer, an extortioner*, or an *unjuſt* perſon, his practice will have the greater weight: And when they find him as regularly at the card-table and aſſem-

aſſembly-room, as he is at the church, the Devil brings them to think they are as much in their duty when they are playing quadrille, or dancing *the Prieſt in his boots*, as when they are reckoning their beads, or liſtening to the Prieſt in his ſurplice. Hence it is become better known, and oftner quoted, than any ſcriptural precept, "Such amuſements are abſolutely *neceſſary* for us, in order to relax the mind, which, like a bow, ſhould not be always on the ſtretch." St. Paul expreſſes the purport of theſe words thus—"Let us do EVIL, that GOOD may come," but then adds, "whoſe damnation is juſt."

Many, I believe, have been arreſted by a guilty conſcience, and convinced of ſin by the SPIRIT of GOD, but have ſoon ſilenced their clamorous fears, and quenched divine emotions, by ſuch reflections as theſe —"Why do I torment myſelf with ſuch needleſs ſcruples? Surely, there can be no danger in doing as my Miniſter does—he has a right to know better than me. Should I make myſelf wiſer than him who has been regularly bred at the *College*, and appointed my Teacher?" This falſe reaſoning, injected by the grand enemy of ſouls, often ſatisfies the poor deluded ſinner, and iniquity proves his everlaſting ruin.

Falſe Prophets (ſays CHRIST) *ſhall ariſe, and ſhall deceive many*; yea, *if it were poſſible they ſhall deceive the very elect*. By a ſervile condeſcenſion, and adulatory compliments——*by good words and fair ſpeeches* they inſinuate themſelves into *the hearts of the ſimple*. *Departing out of the way* themſelves, they cauſe

cauſe many to ſtumble at the law. When they ſee any one that is ſeeking the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, what pains do they take——what entreaties——what threatnings do they uſe, to draw him back again to *the beggarly elements of the world*; and *make him two fold more the child of hell than he was before!* When he is crying out, in bitterneſs of ſoul, with the blind Beggar in the goſpel, *JESUS, thou ſon of David, have mercy on me*, they ſay unto him as the multitude did unto Bartimeus, *hold thy peace.* If he *cries out a great deal the more*, inſtead of directing him to that *blood which cleanſeth us from all ſin*, they adopt the language of the Infidel whom Solomon introduces as ſpeaking thus, *Be not righteous over-much, why ſhouldſt thou deſtroy thyſelf?* Put theſe whimſical enthuſiaſtic notions out of your head.—They are only the effect of a diſtempered brain, or a diſordered body. Go, as uſual, among your old companions, and laugh, and dance, and ſing with them. Every day, read ſome entertaining novel, and ride out now and then. God knows whereof we are made.—He is very merciful, and has given us the good things of life that we might enjoy them. All he expects of us is our ſincere, tho' imperfect endeavours: Therefore, if you attend your Church and receive the ſacrament, my life for yours, all will be well; and you'll get to Heaven, ſooner than theſe canting hypocrites that would drive people out of their ſenſes." Thus do thoſe *Phyſicians of no value turn the lame out of the way*, and *ſtrengthen the hands of evil doers, ſo that none return from their wickedneſs.*

Indeed, my dear brethren in the miniſtry, it is becauſe *I am jealous over you with a godly jealouſy*, that I have thus ſpoken; and *I beſeech you*, patiently *bear*

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the word of exhortation. I really think that every member of our body, who is not *a pattern of good works*, ought to be held forth to public view, as the greatest bane of the community; because it is an allowed maxim that example is more prevalent than precept. *He that holdeth the seven ſtars in his right hand* ſaid unto the church of Epheſus, in commendation, *thou canſt not bear them which are evil—thou haſt tried them which ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them liars.* CHRIST himſelf, alſo, expreſsly deſires us to *take heed how we hear—to beware of falſe Prophets*, adding, *ye ſhall know them by their fruits.* As, then, 'tis ſelf-evident, that our church, as well as every other, abounds with miniſters who act in direct oppoſition to their moſt holy function, it is *charity* to expoſe their practices, and poiſonous tenets, that the people may not be led blindfold by ſuch teachers, who *have need to be taught themſelves which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God.* Is it not on our manner of life and preaching that the ſalvation of mankind, in a great meaſure, depends? Should we not, therefore, *take heed unto ourſelves and to our doctrine, that ſo we might both ſave ourſelves and thoſe that hear us?*

There ſhall be like people, like prieſt, ſays Hoſea. If, then, we are not *an example to the believers in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity*, both ſhepherds and flocks will be *carried away captive.* If our reſpective congregations obſerve us *living after the fleſh*, in conformity to the common cuſtoms of the ſinful world, they muſt naturally conclude that we only *teach for hire, and divine for money*—that our preaching is only a matter of form which we muſt neceſſarily execute to entitle us to our

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lidary—that religion is all a farce—damnation a mere chimera—and hell only a bug-bear to frighten children! If, on the contrary, we be *nourished up in the words of faith*, and conscientiously fulfill our duty, *warning every man, teaching every man, that we may present every man and perfect in* CHRIST JESUS, our bright example would so animate our hearers, that they would be stirred up to *take the kingdom of Heaven by violence.* If each of us would say with Isaiah, *For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth,*" there is the greatest reason to expect that *much good would be done in the name of the holy child* JESUS. Did we *determine to know nothing but* JESUS CHRIST *and him crucified*, numbers would be attracted by the glorious pattern, and *receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save their souls.*

Let us, then, my dear brethren, *meditate on these things, and give ourselves* WHOLLY *to them; that our profiting may appear to all.* Let us *that make mention of the* LORD *give him no rest, 'till he establish, and make Jerusalem a praise on the earth.* Then shall we be deservedly *named the priests of the* LORD *—men shall call us the Ministers of our* GOD: And after *turning many to righteousness*, we shall *shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.* Amen.

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